

THE
WORKS
OF
WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

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THE

W. H. O. N. S.

OF

WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

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WILLIAM

OF THE CITY OF LONDON

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OF THE CITY OF LONDON

—

TALES OF MY LANDLORD,

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

JEDEDIAH CLEISHBOTHAM.

*Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk to Jonny Groats',
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it,
A chiel's amang you takin' notes,
An' faith he'll prent it.*

BURNS.

VOL. II.

THE BLACK DWARF. P. II.

ZWICKAU,

PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

1822.

TALIS
OF MY LAND
COLLECTED AND ARRANGED
BY
JEDOLAN CLISHBOTHAM

There, I find of Talis and herbs
I have the pleasure to inform
I have a list of your names
I will be glad to
A child among you will
I will be glad to
I will be glad to
I will be glad to

Vol. II
THE SECOND PART

WHICH
PRINTED FOR BENTLEY & SON
1822

CHAPTER IX.

*I left my ladye's bower last night —
It was clad in wreaths of snaw, —
I sought it when the sun was bright,
And sweet the roses blaw.*

Old Ballad.

INCENSED at what he deemed the coldness of his friends, in a cause which interested him so nearly, Hobbie had shaken himself free of their company, and was now upon his solitary road homeward. "The fiend founder thee!" he said, as he spurred impatiently his over-fatigued and stumbling horse; "thou art like a' the rest of them. Hae I not fed thee, and bred thee, and dressed thee wi' mine ain hand, and wouldst thou snapper now and break my neck at my utmost need? But thou'rt e'en like the laive

— the farthest off o' them a' is my cousin ten times removed; and day or night I wad hae served them wi' my best blood; and now, I think they shew mair regard to the common thief of Westburnflat than to their own kinsman. But I should see the lights now in Heugh-foot—Waes me!" he continued, recollecting himself, "there will neither 'coal nor candle-light shine in the Heugh-foot ony mair! An' it werena for my mother and sisters, and poor Grace, I could find in my heart to put spurs to the beast, and loup ower the scaur into the water to make an end o't a'." — In this disconsolate mood, he turned his horse's bridle toward the cottage in which his family had found refuge.

As he approached the door, he heard whispering and tittering among his sisters. "The devil's in the women," said poor Hobbie; "they would nicker, and laugh, and giggle, if their best friend was lying a corp — and yet I am glad they can keep up their hearts sae weel, poor silly things; but the dirdum fa's on me, to be sure, and no on them."

While he thus meditated, he was engaged in fastening up his horse in a shed. "Thou

maun do without horse-sheet and surcingle now, lad," he said, addressing the animal; "you and me hae had a downcome alike — we had better hae fa'en in the deepest pool o Tarras."

He was interrupted by the youngest of his sisters, who came running out, and speaking in a constrained voice, as if to stifle some emotion, called out to him, "What are ye doing there, Hobbie, fiddling about the naig, and there's ane frae Cumberland been waiting here for ye this hour and mair? Haste ye in, man; I'll take off the saddle."

"Ane frae Cumberland!" exclaimed Elliot; and putting the bridle of his horse into the hand of his sister, he rushed into the cottage. "Where is he? where is he?" he exclaimed, glancing eagerly round, and seeing only females; "Did he bring news of Grace?"

"He dought na bide an instant langer," said the elder sister, still with a suppressed laugh.

"Hout fie, bairns!" said the old lady, with something of a good-humoured reproof, "ye shouldna vex your billy Hobbie that way. Look

round, my bairn, and see if there isna ane here mair than you left this morning."

Hobbie looked eagerly round. "There's you, and the three titties."

"There's four o' us now, Hobbie, lad," said the youngest, who at this moment entered.

In an instant Hobbie had in his arms Grace Armstrong, who, with one of his sister's plaids around her, had passed unnoticed at his first entrance. "How dared you do this?" said Hobbie.

"It wasna my fault," said Grace, endeavouring to cover her face with her hands, to hide at once her blushes, and escape the storm of hearty kisses with which her bridegroom punished her simple stratagem, — "It wasna my fault, Hobbie; ye should kiss Jeanie and the rest o' them, for they hae the wyte o't."

"And so I will," said Hobbie, and embraced and kissed his sisters and grandmother a hundred times, while the whole party half-laughed, half-cried, in the extremity of their joy. "I am the happiest man," said Hobbie, throwing

himself down on a seat, almost exhausted, —
 “I am the happiest man in the world.”

“Then, O my dear bairn,” said the good old dame, who lost no opportunity of teaching her lesson of religion at those moments when the heart was best opened to receive it, — “Then, O my son, give praise to Him that brings smiles out o’ tears and joy out o’ grief, as he brought light out o’ darkness and the world out o’ naething. Was it not my word, that, if ye could say His will be done, ye might hae cause to say His name be praised?”

“It was — it was your word, grannie; and I do praise Him for his mercy, and for leaving me a good parent when my ain were gane,” said honest Hobbie, taking her hand, “that puts me in mind to think of Him, baith in happiness and distress.”

There was a solemn pause of one or two minutes, employed in the exercise of mental devotion, which expressed, in purity and sincerity, the gratitude of the affectionate family to that Providence who had unexpectedly restored to their embraces the friend whom they had lost.”

Hobbie's first enquiries were concerning the adventures which Grace had undergone. They were told at length, but amounted in substance to this: — That she was awaked by the noise which the ruffians made in breaking into the house, and by the resistance made by one or two of the servants, which was soon overpowered; that, dressing herself hastily, she ran down stairs, and having seen, in the scuffle, Westburnflat's vizard drop off, imprudently named him by his name, and besought him for mercy; that the ruffian instantly stopped her mouth, dragged her from the house, and placed her on horseback, behind one of his associates.

“I'll break the accursed neck of him,” said Hobbie, “if there werena another Græme in the land but himsel!”

She proceeded to say, that she was carried southward along with the party, and the spoil which they drove before them, until they had crossed the Border. Suddenly a person, known to her as a kinsman of Westburnflat, came riding very fast after the marauders, and told their leader, that his cousin had learnt from a sure hand that no luck would come of it,

unless the lass was restored to her friends. After some discussion, the chief of the party seemed to acquiesce. Grace was placed behind her new guardian, who pursued in silence, and with great speed, the leastfrequented path to the Heugh-foot, and ere evening closed set down the fatigued and terrified damsel within a quarter of a mile of the dwelling of her friends. Many and sincere were the congratulations which passed on all sides.

As these emotions subsided, less pleasing considerations began to intrude themselves.

"This is a miserable place for ye a'," said Hobbie, looking around him; "I can sleep weel aneugh mysel out-bye beside the naig, as I hae done mony a lang night on the hills, but how ye are to put yoursels up, I canna see! And, what's waur, I canna mend it; and, what's waur than a', the morrow may come, and the day after that, without your being a bit better off."

"It was a cowardly, cruel thing," said one of the sisters, looking round, "to harry a poor family to the bare wa's this gate."

“And leave us neither stirk nor stot,” said the youngest brother, who now entered, “nor sheep nor lamb, nor aught that eats grass and corn.”

“If they had ony quarrel wi’ us,” said Harry, the second brother, “were we na ready to have fought it out? And that we should have been a’ frae hame, too, — ane and a’ upon the hill — Odd, an’ we had been at hame, Will Græme’s stromach shouldna hae wanted it’s morning; but it’s biding him, is it na, Hobbie?”

“Our neighbours hae ta’en a day at the Castleton to gree wi’ him at the sight o’ men,” said Hobbie mournfully; “they behoved to have it a’ their ain gate, or there was nae help to be got at their hand.”

“To gree wi’ him!” exclaimed both his brothers at once, “after siccan an act of stouthrife as hasna been heard o’ in the country since the auld riding days!”

“Very true, billics, and my blood was e’en boiling at it; but — the sight o’ Grace Armstrong has settled it brawly.”

„But the stocking, Hobbie?” said John Eliot; „we’re utterly ruined. Harry and I hae been to gather what was on the outbye land, and there’s scarce a cloot left. I kenna how we’re to carry on — We maun a’ gang to the wars, I think. Westburnflat hasna the means, e’en if he had the will, to make up our loss; there’s nae mends to be got o’ him, but what ye take out o’ his banes. He hasna a four-footed creature but the vicious blood thing he rides on, and that’s sair trash’d wi’ his night-wark. We are ruined stoop and roop.”

Hobbie cast a mournful glance on Grace Armstrong, who returned it with a downcast look and a gentle sigh.

„Dinna be cast down, bairns,” said the grandmother, „we hae gude friends that winna forsake us in adversity. There’s Sir Thomas Kitteloof is my third cousin by the mother’s side, and he has come by a hantle siller, and been made a knight-baronet into the bargain, for being ane o’ the commissioners at the Union.”

„He wadna gi’e a boddle to save us frae famishing,” said Hobbie; „and, if he did, the bread that I bought wi’t would stick in my

throat when I thought it was part of the price of puir auld Scotland's crown and independence."

"There's the Laird of Dunder, ane of the auldest families in Tiviotdale."

"He's in the tolbooth, mother — he's in the Heart of Mid-Lothian for a thousand merk he borrowed from Saunders Wyliccoat, the writer."

"Poor man!" exclaimed Mrs Elliot, "can we no send him something, Hobbie?"

"Ye forget, grannie, ye forget we want help oursels," said Hobbie, somewhat peevishly.

"Troth did I, hinny," replied the goodnatured lady, "just at the instant; it's sae natural to think o' ane's blude relations before themsels. Dut there's young Earnscliff."

"He has ower little o' his ain; and siccan a name to keep up, it wad be a shame," said Hobbie, "to burden him wi' our distress. And I'll tell ye, grannie, it's needless to sit rhyming ower the style of a' your kith, hin, and allies, as if there was a charm in their braw names to do us good; the grandees hae forgotten us,

and those of our ain degree hae just little an-
 eugh to gang on wi' themsels; ne'er a friend
 hae we that can, or will, help us to stock the
 farm again."

"Then Hobbie, we maun trust in Him that
 can raise up friends and fortune out o' the bare
 muir, as they say."

Hobbie sprung upon his feet. "Ye are right,
 grannie!" he exclaimed; "ye are right. I do
 ken a friend on the bare muir, that baith can,
 and will, help us — The turns o' this day hae
 dung my head clean hirdie girdie. I left as
 much gowd lying on Mucklestane-Muir this
 morning as would plenish the house, and stock
 the Heugh-foot, twice ower, and I am sure
 Elshie wadna grudge us the use of it."

"Elshie!" said his grandmother in astonish-
 ment; "What Elshie do you mean?"

"What Elshie should I mean but Canny El-
 shie, the Wise Wight o' Mucklestane-Muir?"
 replied Hobbie.

"God forefend, my bairn, you should gang
 to fetch water out o' broken cisterns, or seek
 XLVII. B

for relief frae them that deal wi' the Evil One! There was never luck in their gifts, nor grace in their paths. And the hale country kens that body Elshie's an unco man. O, if there was the law, and the douce, quiet administration of justice, that makes a kingdom flourish in righteousness, the like o' them suldna be suffered to live! The wizard and the witch are the abomination and the evil thing in the land."

"Troth, mother," answered Hobbie, "ye may say what ye like, but I am in the mind that witches and warlocks havena half the power they had lang syne; at least, sure am I, that ae ill-deviser, like auld Ellieslaw, or ae ill-doer, like that d — d villain, Westburnflat, is a greater plague and abomination in a country-side than a hale curnie o' the warst witches that ever capered on a broomstick, or played cantrips on Fastren's E'en. It wad hae been lang or Elshie had burnt down my house and barns, and I am determined to try if he will do aught to build them up again. He's weel kenn'd a skilfu' man ower a' the country, as far as Brough-under-Stanmore."

"Bide a wee, my bairn; mind his benefits havena thriven wi' a' body. Jock Howden died

of the very same disorder Elshie pretended to cure him of, about the fa' o' the leaf; and though he helped Lambside's cow weel out of the moor-ill, yet the louping-ill's been sairer amang his sheep than ony season before. And then I have heard he uses sic words abusing human nature, that's like a flying in the face of Providence; and ye mind ye said yoursel, the first time ye ever saw him, that he was mair like a bogle than a living thing."

"Hout, mother," said Hobbie, "Elshie's no that bad a chield; he's a grewsome spectacle for a crooked disciple, to be sure, and a rough talker, but his bark is waur than his bite; sae, if I had anes something to eat, for I havena had a morsel down my throat this day, I wad streek mysel down for twa three hours aside the beast, and be on and awa to Mucklestane wi' the first skreigh o' morning."

"And what for no the night, Hobbie?" said Harry, "and I'll ride wi' ye."

"My nag's tired," said Hobbie.

"Ye may take mine, then," said John.

„But I am a wee thing wearied mysel.”

„You wearied?” said Harry; „shame on ye! I have henn’d ye keep the saddle four-and-twenty hours thegither, and ne’er sic a word as weariness in your wame.”

„The night’s very dark,” said Hobbie, rising and looking through the casement of the cottage; „and, to speak truth, and shame the de’il, though Elshie’s a real honest fallow, yet somegate I would rather take day-light wi’ me when I gang to visit him.”

This frank avowal put a stop to farther argument; and Hobbie, having thus compromised matters between the rashness of his brothers’ counsel, and the timid cautions which he received from his grandmother, refreshed himself with such food as the cottage afforded; and, after a cordial salutation all round, retired to the shed, and stretched himself beside his trusty palfrey. His brothers shared between them some trusses of clean straw, disposed in the stall usually occupied by old Annaple’s cow; and the females arranged themselves for repose as well as the accommodations of the cottage would permit.

With the first dawn of morning, Hobbie arose; and, having rubbed down and saddled his horse, he set forth to Mucklestane Moor. He avoided the company of either of his brothers, from an idea, that the Dwarf was most propitious to those who visited him alone.

„The creature,” said he to himself, as he went along, „is no neighbourly; ae body at a time is fully mair than he weell can abide. I wonder if he’s looked out o’ the crib o’ him to gather up the bag o’ siller. If he hasna done that, it will hae been a braw windfa’ for somebody, and I’ll be finely flung. — Come, Tarras,” said he to his horse, striking him at the same time with the spur, „make mair fit, man; we maun be first on the field if we can.”

He was now on the heath, which began to be illuminated by the beams of the rising sun; the gentle declivity which he was descending presented him a distinct, though distant, view of the Dwarf’s dwelling. The door opened, and Hobbie witnessed with his own eyes that phæ-nomenon which he had frequently heard mentioned. Two human figures (if that of the Dwarf could be termed such) issued from the solitary abode of the Recluse, and stood as if

in converse together in the open air. The taller form then stooped, as if taking something up which lay beside the door of the hut, then both moved forward a little way, and again halted, as in deep conference. All Hobbie's superstitious terrors revived on witnessing this spectacle. That the Dwarf would open his dwelling to a mortal guest, was as improbable as that any one would choose voluntarily to be his nocturnal visitor; and, under full conviction that he beheld a wizard holding intercourse with his familiar spirit, Hobbie pulled in at once his breath and his bridle, resolved not to incur the indignation of either by a hasty intrusion on their conference. They were probably aware of his approach, for he had not halted for a moment before the Dwarf returned to his cottage; and the taller figure who had accompanied him, glided round the inclosure of the garden, and seemed to disappear from the eyes of the admiring Hobbie.

"Saw ever mortal the like o' that!" said Elliot; "but my case is desperate, sae, if he were Belzebub himsel, I'se venture down the brae on him."

Yet, notwithstanding his assumed courage,

he slackened his pace when, nearly upon the very spot where he had last seen the tall figure, he discerned, as if lurking among the long heather, a small black rough-looking object, like a terrier dog. "He has nae dog that ever I heard of," said Hobbie, "but mony a de'il about his hand — Lord forgi'e me for saying sic a word! — It keeps its grund, be what it like — I'm judging it's a badger; but whae kens what shapes thae bogles will take to fright a body — it will maybe start up like a lion or a crocodile when I come nearer — I'se e'en drive a stane at it, for if it change it's shape when I'm ower near, Tarras will never stand it, and it will be ower muckle to hae him and the de'il to fight wi' baith at ance."

He therefore cautiously threw a stone at the object, which continued motionless. "It's nae living thing, after a'," said Hobbie, "but the very bag o' siller he flung out o' the window yesterday! and that other queer lang creature has just brought it sae muckle farther on the way to me." He then advanced and lifted the heavy fur pouch, which was quite full of gold. "Mercy on us!" said Hobbie, whose heart fluttered between glee at the revival of his hopes and prospects in life, and suspicion of the pur-

pose for which this assistance was afforded him — “Mercy on us! it’s an awfu’ thing to touch what has been sae lately in the claws of something no canny. I canna shake myself loose o’ the belief that there has been some jookery-paukery of Satan’s in a’ this; but I am determined to conduct mysel like an honest man and a good Christian, come o’t what will.”

He advanced accordingly to the cottage door, and having knocked repeatedly without receiving any answer, he at length elevated his voice and addressed the inmate of the hut. “Elshie! Father Elshie! I ken ye’re within doors, and wauking, for I saw ye at the door-cheek as I cam o’er the bent; will ye come out and speak just a gliff to ane that has mony thanks to gi’e ye? — It was a’ true ye tell’d me about Westburnflat; but he’s sent back Grace safe and skaithless, sae there’s nae ill happened yet but what may be suffered or sustained. — Wad ye but come out a gliff, man, or but say ye’re listening? — Aweel, since ye winna answer, I’se e’en proceed wi’ my tale. Ye see I hae been thinking it wad be a sair thing on twa young folk, like Grace and me, to put aff our marriage for mony years till I was abroad and came back again wi’ some gear; and they say

folk manna take booty in the wars as they did lang syne, and the pay's a sma' matter; there's nae gathering gear on that — and then my gude-dame's auld — and my sisters wad sit pinging at the ingle-side for want o' me to ding them about — and Earnscliff, or the neighbourhood, or maybe your ain sell, Elshie, might want some good turn that Hob Elliot could do ye — and it's a pity that the auld house o' the Heugh-foot should be wrecked a' thegither — Sae I was thinking — But de'il hae me, that I should say sae," continued he, checking himself, "if I can bring mysel to ask a favour of ane that winna sae muckle as ware a word on me, to tell me if he hears me speaking till him."

"Say what thou wilt — do what thou wilt," answered the Dwarf from his cabin, "but be-gone, and leave me at peace."

"Weel, weel," replied Elliot, "since ye are content to hear me, I'se make my tale short. — Since ye are sae kind as to say ye are content to lend me as muckle siller as will stock and plenish the Heughfoot, I am content, on my part, to accept the courtesy wi' mony kind thanks; and troth, I think it will be as safe

in my hands as yours. if ye leave it flung about in that gate for the first loon body to lift, forbye the risk o' bad neighbours that can win through steekit door and lock-fast places, as I can tell to my cost. I say, since ye hae sae muckle consideration for me, I'se be blythe to accept your kindness; and my mother and me (she's a life-renter, and I am fiar o' the lands of Wvideopen) would grant you a wad-set, or an heritable bond, for the siller, and to pay the annual rent half yearly; and Saunders Wyliecoat to draw the bond, and you to be at nae charge wi' the writings."

"Cut short thy jargon, and begone," said the Dwarf; thy loquacious bullheaded honesty makes thee a more intolerable plague than the light-fingered courtier who would take a man's all without troubling him with either thanks, explanation, or apology. Hence, I say! thou art one of those tame slaves whose word is as good as their bond. Keep the money, principal and interest, until I demand it of thee."

"But," continued the pertinacious Borderer, "we are a' life-like and death-like, Elshie, and there really should be some black and white on this transaction. Sae just make me

a minute, or missive, in ony form ye like, and I'se write it fair ower, and subscribe it before famous witnesses. Only, Elshie, I wad wuss ye to put naething in't that may be prejudicial to my salvation; for I'll hae the minister to read it ower, and it wad only be exposing yoursel to nae purpose. And now I'm ganging awa', for ye'll be wearied o' my cracks, and I am wearied wi' cracking without an answer — and I'se bring ye a bit o' bride'scake ane o' thae days, and maybe bring Grace to see you. Ye wad like to see Grace, man, for as dour as ye are — Eh, Lord! I wish he may be weel, that was a sair grane! or, maybe, he thought I was speaking of heavenly grace, and no of Grace Armstrong. Poor man, I am very doubtfu' o' his condition; but I am sure he is as kind to me as if I were his son, and a queer looking father I wad hae had, if that had been e'en sae."

Hobbie now relieved his benefactor of his presence, and rode blythely home to display his treasure, and consult upon the means of repairing the damage which his fortune had sustained through the aggression of the Red Reiver of Westburnflat.

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## CHAPTER XI.

*Three russians seized me yester morn,  
 Alas! a maiden most forlorn;  
 They choked my cries with wicked might,  
 And bound me on a palfrey white;  
 As sure as Heaven shall pity me,  
 I cannot tell what men they be.*

*Christabelle.*

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THE course of our story must here revert a little, to detail the circumstances which had placed Miss Vere in the unpleasant situation from which she was unexpectedly, and indeed unintentionally, liberated, by the appearance of Earnscliff and Elliot, with their friends and followers, before the Tower of Westburnflat.

On the morning preceding the night in which Hobbie's house was plundered and burnt, Miss



Vere was requested by her father to accompany him in a walk through a distant part of the romantic grounds which lay around his Castle of Ellieslaw. "To hear was to obey," in the true style of oriental despotism; but Isabella trembled in silence while she followed her father through rough paths, now winding by the side of the river, now ascending the cliffs which serve for its bank. A single servant, selected perhaps for his stupidity, was the only person who attended them. From her father's silence, Isabella little doubted that he had chosen this distant and sequestered scene to resume the argument which they had so frequently maintained upon the subject of Sir Fredericks's addresses, and that he was meditating in what manner he should most effectually impress upon her the necessity of receiving him as her suitor. But her fears seemed for some time to be unfounded. The only sentences which her father from time to time addressed to her, respected the beauties of the romantic landscape through which they strolled, and which varied its features at every step. To these observations, although they seemed to come from a heart occupied by more gloomy as well as more important cares, Isabella endeavoured to answer in a manner as free and unconstrained as it



was possible for her to assume, amid the involuntary apprehensions which crowded upon her imagination.

Sustaining, with mutual difficulty, a desultory conversation, they at length gained the centre of a small wood, composed of large old oaks, intermingled with birches, mountain-ashes, hazel, holly, and a variety of underwood. The boughs of the tall trees met closely above, and the underwood filled up each interval between their trunks below. The spot on which they stood was rather more open; still, however, embowered under the natural arcade of tall trees, and darkened on the sides for a space around by a great and lively growth of copse-wood and bushes.

“And here, Isabella,” said Mr Vere, as he pursued the conversation, so often resumed, so often dropped, “here I would erect an altar to Friendship.”

“To Friendship, sir!” said Miss Vere; “and why on this gloomy and sequestered spot, rather than elsewhere?”

“O, the propriety of the *locale* is easily vin-



dedicated," replied her father with a sneer. "You know, Miss Vere, (for you, I am well aware, are a learned young lady,) you know, that the Romans were not satisfied with embodying, for the purpose of worship, each useful quality and moral virtue to which they could give a name, but they, moreover, worshipped the same under each variety of titles and attributes which could give a distinct shade, or individual character, to the virtue in question. Now, for example, the Friendship to whom a temple should be here dedicated, is not Masculine Friendship, which abhors and despises duplicity, art, and disguise; but Female Friendship, which consists in little else than a mutual disposition on the part of the friends, as they call themselves, to abet each other in obscure fraud and petty intrigue."

"You are severe, sir," said Miss Vere.

"Only just," said her father; "a humble copier I am from nature, with the advantage of contemplating two such excellent studies as Lucy Ilderton and yourself."

"If I have been unfortunate enough to offend, sir, I can conscientiously excuse Miss



Ilderton from being either my counsellor, or confidante."

"Indeed! how came you, then," said Mr Vere, "by the flippancy of speech, and pertness of argument, by which you have disgusted Sir Frederick, and given me of late such deep offence?"

"If my manner has been so unfortunate as to displease you, sir, it is impossible for me to apologize too deeply, or too sincerely; but I cannot confess the same contrition for having answered Sir Frederick flippantly when he pressed me rudely. Since he forgot I was a lady, it was time to shew him that I am at least a woman."

"Reserve then your pertness for those who press you on the topic, Isabella," said her father coldly; "for my part, I am weary of the subject, and will never speak upon it again."

"God bless you, my dear father," said Isabella, seizing his reluctant hand; "there is nothing you can impose on me, save the task of listening to this man's persecution, that I will call, or think, a hardship."



“You are very obliging, Miss Vere, when it happens to suit you to be dutiful,” said her unrelenting father, forcing himself at the same time from the affectionate grasp of her hand; “but henceforward, child, I shall save myself the trouble of offering you unpleasant advice on any topic. You must look to yourself.”

At this moment four ruffians rushed upon them. Mr Vere and his servant drew their hangers, which it was the fashion of the time to wear, and attempted to defend themselves and protect Isabella. But while each of them was engaged by an antagonist, she was forced into the thicket by the two remaining villains, who placed her and themselves on horses which stood ready behind the copse-wood. They mounted, at the same time, and placing her between them, set off at a round gallop, holding the reins of her horse on each side. By many an obscure and winding path, over dale and down, through moss and moor, she was conveyed to the tower of Westburnflat, where she remained strictly watched, but not otherwise ill treated, under the guardianship of the old woman, to whose son that retreat belonged. No entreaties could prevail upon the hag to give Miss Vere any information on the object



of her being carried forcibly off and confined in this secluded place. The arrival of Earnscliff, with a strong party of horsemen before the tower, alarmed the robber. As he had already directed Grace Armstrong to be restored to her friends, it did not occur to him that this unwelcome visit was on her account; and seeing at the head of the party, Earnscliff, whose attachment to Miss Vere was whispered in the country, he doubted not that her liberation was the sole object of the attack upon his fastness. The dread of personal consequences compelled him to deliver up his prisoner in the manner we have already related.

At the moment the tramp of the horses was heard which carried off the daughter of Ellieslaw, her father fell to the ground, and his servant, a stout young fellow, who was gaining ground on the ruffian with whom he had been engaged, left the combat to come to his master's assistance, little doubting that he had received a mortal wound. Both the villains immediately desisted from farther combat, and, retreating into the thicket, mounted their horses, and went off at full speed after their companions. Mean time, Dixon had the satisfaction to find Mr Vere, not only alive but un-



wounded. He had overreached himself, and stumbled, it seemed, over the root of a tree in making too eager a blow at his antagonist. The despair he felt at his daughter's disappearance was, in Dixon's phrase, such as would have melted the heart of a whinstane, and he was so much exhausted by his feelings, and the vain researches which he made to discover the track of the ravishers, that a considerable time elapsed ere he reached home, and communicated the alarm to his domestics.

All his conduct and gestures were those of a desperate man.

"Speak not to me, Sir Frederick," he said impatiently; "you are no father — she was my child, an ungrateful one, I fear, but still my child — my only child. Where is Miss Ilderton? she must know something of this. It corresponds with what I was informed of her schemes. Go, Dixon, call Ratcliffe here — Let him come without a minute's delay."

The person he had named at this moment entered the room.

"I say, Dixon," continued Mr Vere in an



altered tone, "let Mr Ratcliffe know, I beg the favour of his company on particular business. — Ah! my dear sir," he continued, as if noticing him for the first time, "you are the very man whose advice can be of the utmost service in this cruel extremity."

"What has happened, Mr Vere, to discompose you?" said Mr Ratcliffe gravely; and while the Laird of Ellieslaw details to him, with the most animated gestures of grief and indignation, the singular adventure of the morning, we will take the opportunity to inform our readers of the relative circumstances in which these gentlemen stood to each other.

In early youth Mr Vere of Ellieslaw had been remarkable for a career of dissipation, which, in advanced life, he had exchanged for the no less destructive career of dark and turbulent ambition. In both cases, he had gratified the predominant passion without respect to the diminution of his private fortune, although, where such inducements were wanting, he was deemed close, avaricious, and grasping. His affairs being much embarrassed by his earlier extravagance, he went to England, where he was understood to have formed a very advantageous



matrimonial connection. He was many years absent from his family estate. Suddenly and unexpectedly he returned a widower, bringing with him his daughter, then a girl of about ten years old. From this moment his expence seemed unbounded in the eyes of the simple inhabitants of his native mountains. It was supposed he must necessarily have plunged himself deeply in debt. Yet he continued to live in the same lavish expence, until some months before the commencement of our narrative, when the public opinion of his embarrassed circumstances was confirmed by the residence of Mr Ratcliffe at Ellieslaw Castle, who, by the tacit consent, though obviously to the great displeasure, of the lord of the mansion, seemed, from the moment of his arrival, to assume and exercise a predominant and unaccountable influence in the management of his private affairs.

Mr Ratcliffe was a grave, steady, reserved man, in an advanced period of life. To those with whom he had occasion to speak upon business, he appeared uncommonly well versed in all its forms. With others he held little communication; but in any casual intercourse, or conversation, displayed the powers of an active



and wellinformed mind. For some time before taking up his final residence at the castle, he had been an occasional visitor there, and was at such times treated by Mr Vere (contrary to his general practice towards those who were inferior to him in rank) with marked attention, and even deference. Yet his arrival always appeared to be an embarrassment to his host, and his departure a relief, so that, when he became a constant inmate of the family, it was impossible not to observe indications of the displeasure with which Mr Vere regarded his presence. Indeed, their intercourse formed a singular mixture of confidence and constraint. Mr Vere's most important affairs were regulated by Mr Ratcliffe; and although he was none of those indulgent men of fortune, who, too indolent to manage their own business, are glad to devolve it upon another, yet, in many instances, he was observed to give up his own opinion, and submit to the contradictions which Mr Ratcliffe did not hesitate distinctly to express.

Nothing seemed to vex Mr Vere more than when strangers indicated any observations of the state of tutelage under which he appeared to labour. When it was noticed by Sir Fre-



derick, or any of his intimates, he sometimes repelled their remarks haughtily and indignant-ly, and sometimes endeavoured to evade them, by saying, with a forced laugh, "That Ratcliffe knew his own importance, but that he was the most honest and skilful fellow in the world; and that it would be impossible for him to manage his English affairs without his advice and assistance." Such was the person who entered the room at the moment Mr Vere was summoning him to his presence, and who now heard with surprise, mingled with obvious incredulity, the hasty narrative of what had befallen Miss Vere.

Her father concluded, addressing Sir Frederick, and the other gentlemen, who stood around in astonishment, "And now, my friends, you see the most unhappy father in Scotland. Lend me your assistance, gentlemen — give me your advice, Mr Ratcliffe. I am incapable of acting, or thinking, under the unexpected violence of such a blow."

"Let us take our horses, call our attendants, and scour the country in pursuit of the villains," said Sir Frederick.



“Is there no one whom you can suspect,” said Ratcliffe, gravely, “of having some motive for this strange crime? These are not the days of romance, when ladies are carried off merely for their beauty.”

“I fear,” said Mr Vere, “I can too well account for this strange incident. Read this letter, which Miss Lucy Ilderton thought fit to address from my house of Ellieslaw to young Mr Earnscliff, whom, of all men, I have a hereditary right to call my enemy. You see she writes to him as the confidant of a passion which he has the assurance to entertain for my daughter; tells him she serves his cause with her friend very ardently, but that he has a friend in the garrison who serves him yet more effectually. Look particularly at the pencilled passages, Mr Ratcliffe, where this meddling girl recommends bold measures, with an assurance that his suit would be successful any where beyond the bounds of the barony of Ellieslaw.”

“And you argue from this romantic letter of a very romantic young lady, Mr Vere,” said Ratcliffe, “that young Earnscliff has carried off your daughter, and committed a very great



and criminal act of violence, on no better advice and assurance than that of Miss Lucy Ilderton?"

"What else can I think?" said Ellieslaw.

"What else *can* you think?" said Sir Frederick; "or who else could have any motive for committing such a crime?"

"Were that the best mode of fixing the guilt," said Mr Ratcliffe, calmly, "there might easily be pointed out persons to whom such actions are more congenial, and who have also sufficient motives of instigation. Supposing it were judged advisable to remove Miss Vere to some place in which constraint might be exercised upon her inclinations to a degree which cannot at present be attempted under the roof of Ellieslaw-Castle — What says Sir Frederick Langley to that supposition?"

"I say," returned Sir Frederick, "that although Mr Vere may choose to endure in Mr Ratcliffe freedoms totally inconsistent with his situation in life, I will not permit such licence of inuendo, by word or look, to be extended to me, with impunity."



«And I say,” said young Mareschal of Mareschal-Wells, who was also a guest at the castle, «that you are all stark-mad, to be standing wrangling here, instead of going in pursuit of the ruffians.”

«I have ordered off the domestics already, in the track most likely to overtake them,” said Mr Vere; «if you will favour me with your company, we will follow them and assist their search.”

The efforts of the party were totally unsuccessful, probably because Ellieslaw directed the pursuit to proceed in the direction of Earnscliff-Tower, under the supposition that the owner would prove to be the author of the violence; so that they followed a direction diametrically opposite to that in which the ruffians had actually proceeded. In the evening they returned, harassed and out of spirits. But other guests had, in the meanwhile, arrived at the castle; and, after the recent loss sustained by the owner had been narrated, wondered at, and lamented, the recollection of it was, for the present, drowned in the discussion of deep political intrigues, of which the crisis and explosion were momentarily expected.



Several of the gentlemen who took part in this divan were catholics, and all of them staunch jacobites, whose hopes were at present at the highest pitch, as an invasion, in favour of the Pretender, was daily expected from France, which Scotland, between the defenceless state of its garrisons and fortified places, and the general disaffection of the inhabitants, was rather prepared to welcome than to resist. Ratcliffe, who neither sought to assist at their consultations on this subject, nor was invited to do so, had, in the meanwhile, retired to his own apartment. Miss Ilderton was sequestered from society in a sort of honourable confinement, "until," said Mr Vere, "she should be safely conveyed home to her father's house," an opportunity for which occurred on the following day.

The domestics could not help thinking it remarkable how soon the loss of Miss Vere, and the strange manner in which it had happened, seemed to be forgotten by the other guests at the castle. They knew not, that those the most interested in her fate were well acquainted with the cause of her being carried off, and the place of her retreat; and that the others, in the an-



xious and doubtful moments which preceded the breaking forth of a conspiracy, were little accessible to any feelings but what arose immediately out of their own machinations.



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## CHAPTER XII.

*Some one way, some another — Do you know  
Where we may apprehend her?*

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THE researches after Miss Vere were (for the sake of appearances, perhaps) resumed in the succeeding day with similar bad success, and the party were returning towards Ellieslaw in the evening.

“It is singular,” said Mareschal to Ratcliffe, “that four horsemen and a female prisoner should have passed through the country without leaving the slightest trace of their passage. One would think they had traversed the air, or sunk through the ground.”

“Men may often,” answered Ratcliffe, “arrive at a knowledge of that which is, from disco-



vering that which is *not*. We have now scoured every road, path, and track leading from the castle, in all various points of the compass, saving only that intricate and difficult pass which leads southward down the Westburn, and through the morasses."

"And why have we not examined that?" said Mareschal.

"O, Mr Vere can best answer that question," replied his companion, drily.

"Then I will ask it instantly," said Mareschal; and, addressing Mr Vere, "I am informed, sir, there is a path we have not examined, leading by Westburnflat."

"O," said Sir Frederick, laughing, "we know the owner of Westburnflat well — a wild lad, that knows little difference between his neighbour's goods and his own; but, withal, very honest to his principles: He would disturb nothing belonging to Ellieslaw."

"Besides," said Mr Vere, smiling mysteriously, "he had other tow on his distaff last night. Have you not heard young Elliot of the



Heugh-foot has had his house burnt, and his cattle driven away, because he refused to give up his arms to some honest men that think of starting for the king?"

The company smiled upon each other, as at hearing of an exploit which favoured their own views.

"Yet, nevertheless," resumed Mareschal, "I think we ought to ride in this direction also, otherways we shall certainly be blamed for our negligence."

No reasonable objection could be offered to this proposal, and the party turned their horses' heads towards Westburnflat.

They had not proceeded very far in that direction when the trampling of horses were heard, and a small body of riders was perceived advancing to meet them.

"There comes Earnscliff," said Mareschal. "I know his bright bay with the star in his front."

"And there is my daughter along with him,"



exclaimed Vere furiously. "Who shall call my suspicions false or injurious now? Gentlemen — friends — lend me the assistance of your swords for the recovery of my child."

He unsheathed his weapon, and was imitated by Sir Frederick and several of the party, who prepared to charge those that were advancing towards them. But the greater part hesitated.

"They come to us in all peace and security," said Mareschal-Wells; "let us first hear what account they give us of this mysterious affair. If Miss Vere has sustained the slightest insult or injury from Earnscliff, I will be first to revenge her; but let us hear what they say."

"You do me wrong by your suspicions, Mareschal," continued Vere; "you are the last I would have expected to hear express them."

"You injure yourself, Ellieslaw, by your violence, though the cause may excuse it."

He then advanced a little before the rest, and called out, with a loud voice, — "Stand, Mr Earnscliff, or do you and Miss Vere advance alone to meet us. You are charged with



having carried that lady off from her father's house, and we are here in arms to shed our best blood for her recovery, and for bringing to justice those who have injured her."

"And who would do that more willingly than I, Mr Mareschal?" said Earnscliff, haughtily, — "than I who had the satisfaction this morning to liberate her from the dungeon in which I found her confined, and who am now escorting her back to the Castle of Ellieslaw."

"Is this so, Miss Vere?" said Mareschal.

"It is," answered Isabella, eagerly, — "it is so; for Heaven's sake, sheathe your swords. I will swear by all that is sacred, that I was carried off by ruffians, whose persons and objects were alike unknown to me, and am now restored to freedom by means of this gentleman's gallant interference."

"By whom, and wherefore, could this have been done?" pursued Mareschal. — "Had you no knowledge of the place to which you were conveyed? — Earnscliff, where did you find this lady?"



But ere either question could be answered, Ellieslaw advanced, and, returning his sword to the scabbard, cut short the conference.

“When I know,” he said, “exactly, how much I owe to Mr Earnscliff, he may rely on suitable acknowledgments; mean time,” taking the bridle of Miss Vere’s horse, “thus far I thank him for replacing my daughter in the power of her natural guardian.”

A sullen bend of the head was returned by Earnscliff with equal haughtiness; and Ellieslaw, turning back with his daughter upon the road to his own house, appeared engaged with her in a conference so earnest, that the rest of the company judged it improper to intrude by approaching them too nearly. In the mean time, Earnscliff, as he took leave of the other gentlemen belonging to Ellieslaw’s party, said aloud, “Although I am unconscious of any circumstance in my conduct that can authorize such a suspicion, I cannot but observe, that Mr Vere seems to believe that I have had some hand in the atrocious violence which has been offered to his daughter. I request you, gentlemen, to take notice of my explicit denial of a charge so dishonourable; and that, although



I can pardon the bewildering feelings of a father in such a moment, yet, if any other gentleman," (he looked hard at Sir Frederick Langley,) "thinks my word and that of Miss Vere, with the evidence of my friends who accompany me, too slight for my exculpation, I will be happy — most happy — to repel the charge, as becomes a man who counts his honour dearer than his life."

"And I'll be his second," said Simon of Hackburn, "and take up ony twa o' ye, gentle or semple, laird or loon, it's a' ane to Simon."

"Who is that rough-looking fellow?" said Sir Frederick Langley, "and what has he to do with the quarrels of gentlemen?"

"I'se be a lad frae the Hie Te'iot," said Simon, "and I'se quarrel wi' ony body I like, except the king, or the laird I live under."

"Come," said Mareschal, "let us have no hrawls — Mr Earnscliff, although we do not think alike in some things, I trust we may be opponents, even enemies, if fortune will have it so, without losing our respect for birth, fair-play, and each other. I believe you as innocent of this matter as I am myself; and I will



pledge myself that my cousin, Ellieslaw, so soon as the perplexity attending these sudden events has left his judgment to its free exercise, shall handsomely acknowledge the very important service you have this day rendered him."

"To have served your cousin is a sufficient reward in itself — Good evening, gentlemen," continued Earnscliff, "I see most of your party are already on their way to Ellieslaw."

Then saluting Mareschal with courtesy, and the rest of the party with indifference, Earnscliff turned his horse and rode towards the Heugh-foot, to concert measures with Hobbie Elliot for farther researches after his bride, of whose restoration to her friends he was still ignorant.

"There he goes," said Mareschal; he is a fine gallant, young fellow, upon my soul, and yet I should like well to have a thrust with him on the green turf. I was reckoned at college nearly his equal with the foils, and I should like to try him at sharps."

"In my opinion," answered Sir Frederick Langley, "we have done very ill in having suf-



ferred him and those men who are with him, to go off without taking away their arms; for the whigs are very likely to draw to a head under such a young fellow as that."

"For shame, Sir Frederick," exclaimed Marschal; "do you think that Ellieslaw could, in honour, consent to any violence being offered to Earnscliff, when he entered his bounds only to bring back his daughter? or, if he were to be of your opinion, do you think that I, and the rest of these gentlemen, would disgrace ourselves by assisting in such a transaction? No, no, fairplay and auld Scotland for ever. When the sword is drawn, I will be as ready to use it as any man; but while it is in the sheath, let us behave like gentlemen and neighbours."

Soon after this colloquy they reached the castle, when Ellieslaw, who had been arrived a few minutes before, met them in the courtyard.

"How is Miss Vere? and have you learned the cause of her being carried off?" asked Marschal hastily.



„She is retired to her apartment greatly fatigued, and I cannot expect much light upon her adventure till her spirits are somewhat recruited,” replied her father. „She and I were not the less obliged to you, Mareschal, and to my other friends, for their kind enquiries. But I must suppress the father’s feelings for a while to give myself up to those of the patriot. You know this is the day fixed for our final decision — time passes — our friends are arriving, and I have opened house, not only for the gentry, but for the under-spur-leathers whom we must necessarily employ. We have, therefore, little time to prepare to meet them — look over these lists, Marchie, (an abbreviation by which Mareschal-Wells was known among his friends.) Do you, Sir Frederick, read these letters from Lothian and the west — all is ripe for the sickle, and we have but to summon out the reapers.”

„With all my heart,” said Mareschal; „the more mischief the better sport.”

Sir Frederick looked grave and disconcerted.

„Walk aside with me, my good friend,” said Ellieslaw to the sombre Baronet, „I have so-



something for your private ear, with which I know you will be gratified."

They walked into the house, leaving Ratcliffe and Mareschal standing together in the court.

"And so," said the former to the latter, "the gentlemen of your political persuasion think the downfall of this government so certain, that they disdain even to throw a decent disguise over the machinations of their party?"

"Faith, Mr Ratcliffe," answered Mareschal, "the actions and sentiments of *your* friends may require to be veiled, but I am better pleased that ours can go barefaced."

"And is it possible," continued Ratcliffe, "that you, who, notwithstanding your thoughtlessness and heat of temper, (I beg pardon, Mr Mareschal, I am a plain man) — that you, who, notwithstanding these constitutional defects, possess natural good sense and acquired information, should be infatuated enough to embroil yourself in such desperate proceedings?"



How does your head feel when you are engaged in these dangerous conferences?"

"Not quite so secure on my shoulders," answered Mareschal, "as if I were talking of hunting and hawking. I am not of so indifferent a mould as my cousin Ellieslaw, who speaks treason as if it were child's nursery rhymes, and loses and recovers that sweet girl, his daughter, with a good deal less emotion on both occasions, than would have affected me had I lost and recovered a greyhound puppy. My temper is not quite so inflexible, nor my hate against government so inveterate, as to blind me to the full danger of the attempt."

"Then why involve yourself in it?" said Ratcliffe.

"Why, I love this poor exiled king with all my heart; and my father was an old Gilliecrankie-man, and I long to see some amends on the courtiers that have bought and sold old Scotland, whose crown has been so long independent."

"And for the sake of these shadows," said



his monitor, "you are going to involve your country in war, and yourself in trouble?"

"I involve? No! — but, trouble for trouble, I had rather it came to-morrow than a month hence. Come, I know it will; and, as our country folks say, better soon than syne — it will never find me younger — and, as for hanging, as Sir John Falstaff says, I can become a gallows as well as another. You know the end of the old ballad;

"Sae dauntonly, sae wantonly,  
Sae rantingly gaed he,  
He play'd a spring, and danced a round,  
Beneath the gallows tree."

"Mr Mareschal, I am sorry for you," said his grave adviser.

"I am obliged to you, Mr Ratcliffe; but I would not have you judge of our enterprise by my way of vindicating it; there are wiser heads than mine at the work."

"Wiser heads than yours may lie as low," said Ratcliffe, in a warning tone.



“Perhaps so; but not lighter heart shall; and, to prevent its being made heavier by your remonstrances, I will bid you adieu, Mr Ratcliffe, till dinner time, when you shall see that my apprehensions have not spoiled my appetite.”



### CHAPTER XIII.

*To face the garment of rebellion  
With some fine colour, that may please the eye  
Of fickle changelings, and poor discontents,  
Which gape and rub the elbow at the news  
Of hurly-burly innovation.*

*Henry the Fourth, Part II.*

THERE had been great preparations made at Ellieslaw-Castle for the entertainment of this important day, when not only the gentlemen of note in the neighbourhood, attached to the jacobite interest, were expected to rendezvous, but also many subordinate malcontents, whom difficulty of circumstances, love of change, resentment against England, or any of the numerous causes which inflamed men's passions at the time, rendered apt to join in perilous en-



terprise. The men of rank and substance were not many in number, for almost all the large proprietors stood aloof, and most of the smaller gentry and yeomanry were of the presbyterian persuasion, and, therefore, however displeased with the Union, unwilling to engage in a jacobite conspiracy. But there were some gentlemen of property, who, either from early principle, from religious motives, or sharing the ambitious views of Ellieslaw, had given countenance to his scheme; and there were, also, some fiery young men, like Mareschal, desirous of signalizing themselves, by engaging in a dangerous enterprise, by which they hoped to vindicate the independence of their country. The other members of the party were persons of inferior rank and desperate fortunes, who were now ready to rise in that part of the country, as they did afterwards in the year 1715, under Foster and Derwentwater, when a troop, commanded by a Border gentleman, named Douglas, consisted almost entirely of freebooters, among whom the notorious Luck-in-a-bag, as he was called, held a distinguished command. We think it necessary to mention these particulars, applicable solely to the province in which our scene lies, because, unquestionably, the jacobite party, in the other parts of the king-



dom, consisted of much more formidable, as well as much more respectable, materials.

One long table extended itself down the ample hall of Ellieslaw Castle, which was still left much in the state in which it had been one hundred years before, stretching, that is, in gloomy length, through the whole side of the castle, vaulted with ribbed arches of freestone, the groins of which sprung from projecting figures, which, carved into all the wild forms that the fantastic imagination of a Gothic architect could devise, grinned, frowned, and gnashed their tusks at the assembly below. Long, narrow windows lighted the banquetting-room on both sides, filled up with stained glass, through which the sun emitted a dusky and discoloured light. A banner, which tradition averred to have been taken from the English at the battle of Sark, waved over the chair in which Ellieslaw presided, as if to inflame the courage of the guests, by reminding them of ancient victories over their neighbours. He himself, a portly figure, dressed upon this occasion with uncommon care, and with features, which, though of a stern and sinister expression, might well be termed handsome, looked the old feudal baron extremely well. Sir Frederick Lang-



ley was placed on his right hand, and Mr Mareschal of Mareschal-Wells upon his left. Some gentlemen of consideration, with their sons, brothers, and nephews, occupied the upper end of the table, and amongst these Mr Ratcliffe had his place. Beneath the salt-cellar (a massive piece of plate which occupied the midst of the table) sate the *sine nomine turba*, men whose vanity was gratified by occupying even this subordinate space at the social board, while the distinction observed in ranking them was a salvo to the pride of their superiors. That the lower-house was not very select must be admitted, since Willie of Westburnflat was one of the party. The unabashed audacity of this fellow, in daring to present himself in the house of a gentlemen, to whom he had just offered so flagrant an insult, can only be accounted for by supposing him conscious that his share in carrying off Miss Vere was a secret, safe in her possession and that of her father.

Before this numerous and miscellaneous party was placed at dinner, consisting, not indeed of the delicacies of the season, as the newspapers express it, but of viands, ample, solid, and sumptuous, under which the very board groaned.



But the mirth was not in proportion to the good cheer. The lower end of the table was, for some time, chilled by constraint and respect upon finding themselves members of so august an assembly, and those who were placed around it had those feelings of awe with which P. P., clerk of the parish, describes himself oppressed, when he first uplifted the psalm in presence of those persons of high worship, the wise Mr Justice Freeman, the good Lady Jones, and the great Sir Thomas Truby. This ceremonious frost, however, soon gave way before the incentives to merriment which were liberally supplied, and as liberally consumed by the guests of the lower description. They became talkative, loud, and even clamorous in their mirth.

But it was not in the power of wine or brandy to elevate the spirits of those who held the higher places of the banquet. They experienced the chilling revulsion of spirits, which often takes place when men are called upon to take a desperate resolution, after having placed themselves in circumstances where it is alike difficult to advance or to recede. The precipice looked deeper and more dangerous as they approached to the brink, and each waited with an inward sensation of awe, expecting



which of his confederates would set the example by plunging himself down. This inward sensation of fear and reluctance acted differently, according to the various habits and characters of the company. One looked grave, one looked silly, one gazed with apprehension on the empty seats at the higher end of the table, designed for members of the conspiracy, whose prudence had prevailed over their political zeal, and who had absented themselves from their consultations at this critical period, and some seemed to be reckoning up in their minds the comparative rank and prospects of those who were present and absent. Sir Frederick Langley was absent, moody, and discontented. Ellieslaw himself made such forced efforts to raise the spirits of the company, as plainly marked the flagging of his own. Ratcliffe watched the scene with the composure of a vigilant but uninterested spectator. Mareschal alone, true to the thoughtless vivacity of his character, eat and drank, laughed and jested, and seemed even to find amusement in the embarrassment of the company.

“What has damped our noble courage this morning?” he exclaimed; “we seem to be met at a funeral, where the chief mourners must



not speak above their breath, while the mutes and the saulees (looking to the lower end of the table) are carousing below. Ellieslaw, when will you *lift*? where sleeps your spirit, man? and what has quelled the high hope of the Knight of Langley-dale?"

"You speak like a madman," said Ellieslaw; "Do you not see how many are absent?"

"And what of that? Did you not know before, that one-half of the world are better talkers than doers? For my part, I am much encouraged by seeing at least twothirds of our friends true to the rendezvous, though I suspect one-half of these came to secure the dinner in case of the worst."

"There is no news from the coast which can amount to certainty of the King's arrival," said another of the company, in that tone of subdued and tremulous whisper which implies a failure of resolution.

"Not a line from the Earl of D —, nor a single gentleman from the southern side of the Border."



“What’s he that wishes for more men from England,” exclaimed Mareschal, in a theatrical tone of affected heroism,

“My cousin Ellieslaw? No, my fair cousin, If we are doomed to die” —

“For God’s sake,” said Ellieslaw, “spare us your folly at present, Mareschal.”

“Well, then,” said his kinsman, “I’ll bestow my wisdom upon you instead, such as it is. If we have gone forward like fools, do not let us go back like cowards. We have done enough to draw upon us both the suspicion and vengeance of the government; do not let us give up before we have done something to deserve it. — What, will no one speak? Then I’ll leap the ditch the first.” And, starting up, he filled a beer glass to the brim with claret, and, waving his hand, commanded all to follow his example, and to rise up from their seats. All obeyed — the more qualified guests as if passively, the others with enthusiasm. “Then, my friends, I give you the pledge of the day, — The independence of Scotland, and the health of our lawful sovereign, King James the Eighth,



now landed in Lothian, and, as I trust and believe, in full possession of his ancient capital!"

He quaffed off the wine, and threw the glass over his head.

"It should never," he said, "be profaned by a meaner toast."

All followed his example, and, amid the crash of glasses and the shouts of the company, pledged themselves to stand or fall with the principles and political interest which their toast expressed.

"You have leaped the ditch with a witness," said Ellieslaw, apart to Mareschal; "but I believe it is all for the best; at all events, we cannot now retreat from our undertaking. One man alone," (looking at Ratcliffe) "has refused the pledge; but of that by and by."

Then, rising up, he addressed the company in a style of inflammatory invective against the government and its measures, especially the Union, a treaty, by means of which, he affirmed, Scotland had been at once cheated of her independence, her commerce, and her ho-



nour, and laid as a fettered slave at the foot of the rival, against whom through such a length of ages, through so many dangers, and by so much blood, she had honourably defended her rights. This was touching a theme which found a responsive chord in the bosom of every man present.

“Our commerce is destroyed,” hollowed old John Rewcastle, a Jedburgh smuggler, from the lower end of the table.

“Our agriculture is ruined,” said the Laird of Broken-girth-flow, a territory, which, since the days of Adam, had borne nothing but ling and whortleberries.

“Our religion is cut up, root and branch,” said the pimple-nosed pastor of the Episcopal meeting-house at Kirkwhistle.

“We shall shortly neither dare shoot a deer or kiss a wench, without a certificate from the presbytery and kirk-treasurer,” said Mareschal-Wells.

“Or make a brandy Jeroboam in a frosty morning, without licence from a commissioner of excise,” said the smuggler.



“Or ride over the fell in a moonless night,” said Westburnflat, “without asking leave of young Earnscliff, or some Englified justice of the peace; thae were gude days on the Border when there was neither peace nor justice heard of.”

“Let us remember our wrongs at Darien and Glencoe,” continued Ellieslaw, “and take arms for the protection of our rights, our fortunes, our lives, and our families.”

“Think upon genuine episcopal ordination, without which there can be no lawful clergy,” said the divine.

“Think of the piracies committed on our East-Indian trade by Green and the English thieves,” said William Willieson, half-owner and sole skipper of a brig that made four voyages annually between Cockpool and Whitehaven.

“Remember your liberties,” rejoined Marschal, who seemed to take a mischievous delight in precipitating the movements of the enthusiasm which he had excited, like a roguish boy, that, having lifted the sluice of a mill-



dam, enjoys the clatter of the wheels which he has put into motion, without thinking of the mischief he may have occasioned. "Remember your liberties," he exclaimed, "confound cess, press, and presbytery, and the memory of old Willie that first brought them upon us!"

"Damm the gauger," echoed old John Rewcastle; "I'll cleave him wi' my ain hand."

"And confound the country-keeper and the constable," re-echoed Westburnflat; "I'll weize a braze of balls through them before morning."

"We are agreed, then," said Ellieslaw, when the shouts had something subsided, "to bear this state of things no longer?"

"We are agreed to a man," answered his guests.

"Not literally so," said Mr Ratcliffe; "for though I cannot hope to assuage the violent symptoms which seem so suddenly to have seized upon the company, yet I beg to observe, that so far as the opinion of a single member goes, I do not entirely coincide in the list of grievances which has been announced, and that



I do utterly protest against the frantic measures which you seem disposed to adopt for removing them. I can easily suppose much of what has been spoken may have arisen out of the heat of the moment, or be said perhaps in jest. But there are some jests of a nature very apt to transpire; and you ought to remember, gentlemen, that stone walls have ears."

"Stone walls may have ears," returned Ellieslaw, eyeing him with a look of triumphant malignity, "but domestic spies, Mr Ratcliffe, will soon find themselves without any, if any such dares to continue his abode in a family where his coming was an unauthorized intrusion, where his conduct has been that of a presumptuous meddler, and from which his exit shall be that of a baffled knave, if he does not know how to take a hint."

"Mr Vere," returned Ratcliffe, with calm contempt, "I am fully aware that as soon as my presence becomes useless to you, which it must through the rash step you are about to adopt, it will immediately become unsafe to myself, as it has always been hateful to you. But I have one protection, and it is a strong one; for you would not willingly hear me detail be-



fore gentlemen, and men of honour, the singular circumstance in which our connection took its rise. As to the rest, I rejoice at its conclusion; and as I think that Mr Mareschal and some other gentlemen will guarantee the safety of my ears and of my throat (for which last I have more reason to be apprehensive) during the course of the night, I shall not leave your castle till to-morrow morning."

"Be it so, sir," replied Vere; "you are entirely safe from my resentment, because you are beneath it, and not because I am afraid of your disclosing any family secrets, although, for your own sake, I warn you to beware how you do so. Your agency and intermediation can be of little consequence to one who will win or lose all, as lawful right or unjust usurpation shall succeed in the struggle that is about to ensue. Farewell, sir."

Ratcliffe cast upon him a look, which Vere seemed to sustain with difficulty, and, bowing to those around him, arose and left the room.

This conversation made an impression on many of the company, which Ellieslaw hastened to dispel, by entering upon the business of



the day. Their hasty deliberations went to organize an immediate insurrection. Ellieslaw, Mareschal, and Sir Frederick Langley, were chosen leaders, with powers to direct their farther measures. A place of rendezvous was appointed, at which all agreed to meet early on the ensuing day, with such followers and friends to the cause as each could collect around him. Several of the guests retired to make the necessary preparations; and Ellieslaw made a formal apology to the others, who with Westburn-flat and the old smuggler continued to ply the bottle staunchly, for leaving the head of the table, as he must necessarily hold a separate and sober conference with the coadjutors whom they had associated with him in the command. The apology was the more readily accepted, as he prayed them, at the same time, to continue to amuse themselves with such refreshments as the cellars of the castle afforded. Shouts of applause followed their retreat; and the names of Vere, Langley, and, above all, of Mareschal, were thundered forth in chorus, and bathed with copious bumpers, repeatedly during the remainder of the evening.

When the principal conspirators had retired into a separate apartment, they gazed on each



other for a minute with a sort of embarrassment, which, in Sir Frederick's dark features, amounted to an expression of discontented sullenness. Mareschal was the first to break the pause, saying, with a loud burst of laughter, — "Well! we are fairly embarked now, gentlemen — *vogue la galere!*"

"We may thank you for the plunge," said Ellieslaw.

"Yes; but I don't know how far you will thank me," answered Mareschal, "when I shew you this letter, which I received just before we sat down. My servant told me it was delivered by a man he had never seen before, who went off at the gallop after charging him to put it into my own hand."

Ellieslaw impatiently opened the letter, and read aloud. —

*Edinburgh, —*

HOND. SIR,

Having obligations to your family, which shall be nameless, and learning that you are one of the company of adventurers doing business for the house of James and Company, late merch-



ants in London, now at Dunkirk, I think it right to send you this early and private information, that the vessels you expected have been driven off the coast, without having been able to break bulk, or to land any part of their cargo; and that the west-country partners have resolved to withdraw their name from the firm, as it must prove a losing concern. Having good hope you will avail yourself of this early information, to do what is needful for your own security, I rest your humble servant,

NIHIL NAMELESS

*For RALPH MARESCHAL, of Mareschal-Wells*

*— These, with care and speed.*

Sir Frederick's jaw dropped, and his countenance blackened, as the letter was read, and Ellieslaw exclaimed, — "Why, this affects the very main-spring of our enterprize. If the French fleet, with the king on board, has been chased off by the English, as this d — d scrawl seems to intimate, where are we?"

"Just where we were this morning, I think," said Mareschal, still laughing.

"Pardon me, and a truce to your illtimed mirth, Mr Mareschal. This morning we were



not committed publicly, as we now stand committed, by our own mad act, when you had a letter in your pocket apprizing you that our undertaking was desperate."

"Ay, ay, I expected you would say so. But, in the first place, my friend Nihil Nameless and his letter may be all a sham; and, moreover, I would have you know I am tired of a party that does nothing but form bold resolutions over night, and sleep them away with their wine before morning. The government are now unprovided of men and ammunition; in a few weeks they will have enough of both; the country is now in a flame against them; in a few weeks, betwixt the effects of self-interest, of fear, and of lukewarm indifference, which are already so visible, this first fervour will be as cold as Christmas. So, as I was determined to go the vole, I have taken care you shall dip as deep as I; it signifies nothing plunging. You are fairly in the bog, and must struggle through."

"You are mistaken with respect to one of us, Mr Mareschal," said Sir Frederick Langley, and, applying himself to the bell, desired the attendant who entered to order his servants and horses instantly.



"You must not leave us, Sir Frederick," said Ellieslaw; "we have our musters to go over."

"I will go to-night, Mr Vere," said Sir Frederick, "and write you my intentions in this matter when I am at home."

"Ay," said Mareschal, "and send them by a troop of horse from Carlisle to make us prisoners? Look ye, Sir Frederick, I for one will neither be deserted nor betrayed; and if you leave Ellieslaw-Castle to-night, it shall be by passing over my dead body."

"For shame! Mareschal," said Mr Vere, "how can you so hastily misinterpret our friend's intentions? I am sure Sir Frederick can only be jesting with us; for, were he not too honourable to dream of deserting the cause, he cannot but remember the full proofs we have of his accession to it, and his eager activity in advancing it. He cannot but be conscious, besides, that the first information will be readily received by government, and that if the question be, which can first lodge intelligence of the affair, we can easily save a few hours on him."



“You should say *you*, and not *we*, when you talk of priorities in such a race of treachery; for my part, I won’t enter my horse for such a plate,” said Mareschal; and added, betwixt his teeth, “a pretty pair of fellows to trust a man’s neck with!”

“I am not to be intimidated from doing what I think proper,” said Sir Frederick Langley; “and my first step shall be to leave Ellieslaw. I have no reason to keep faith with one (looking at Vere) who has kept none with me.”

“In what respect?” said Ellieslaw, silencing, with a motion of his hand, his impetuous kinsman, — “how have I disappointed you, Sir Frederick?”

“In the nearest and most tender point — you have trifled with me concerning our proposed alliance, which you well knew was the gage of our political undertaking. This carrying off and this bringing back of Miss Vere, — the cold reception I have met with from her, and the excuses with which you cover it, I believe to be mere evasions, that you may yourself retain possession of the estates which are her’s by right, and make me, in the meanwhile, a tool in your



desperate enterprize, by holding out hopes and expectations which you are resolved never to realize."

"Sir Frederick, I protest by all that is sacred" —

"I will listen to no protestations; I have been cheated with them too long," answered Sir Frederick.

"If you leave us," said Ellieslaw, "you cannot but know both your ruin and ours is certain; all depends on our adhering together."

"Leave me to take care of myself," returned the knight; "but were what you say true, I would rather perish than be fooled any farther."

"Can nothing — no surety convince you of my sincerity?" said Ellieslaw, anxiously; "this morning I should have repelled your unjust suspicions as an insult, but situated as we now are" —

"You feel yourself compelled to be sincere?" retorted Sir Frederick. "If you would have me think so, there is but one way to convince me



of it — let your daughter bestow her hand on me this evening.”

“So soon? — impossible,” answered Vere; “think of her late alarm — of our present undertaking.”

“I will listen to nothing but to her consent, plighted at the altar — You have a chapel in the castle — Doctor Hobbler is present among the company — this proof of your good faith to-night, and we are again joined in heart and hand. If you refuse me when it is so much for your advantage to consent, how shall I trust you to-morrow, when I shall stand committed in your undertaking, and unable to retract?”

“And am I to understand, that, if you can be made my son-in-law to-night, our friendship is renewed?” said Ellieslaw.

“Most infallibly, and most inviolably,” replied Sir Frederick.

“Then,” said Vere, “though what you ask is premature, indelicate, and unjust towards my character, yet, Sir Frederick, give me your hand — my daughter shall be your wife.”



„This night?”

„This very night,” replied Ellieslaw, „before the clock strikes twelve.”

„With her own consent, I trust,” said Mareschal; „for I promise you both, gentlemen, I will not stand tamely by, and see any violence put on the will of my pretty kinswoman.”

„Another pest in this hot-headed fellow,” muttered Ellieslaw; and then aloud, „With her own consent! For what do you take me, Mareschal, that you should suppose your interference necessary to protect my daughter against her father? Depend upon it, she has no repugnance to Sir Frederick Langley.”

„Or rather to be called Lady Langley? faith, like enough — there are many women might be of her mind; and I beg your pardon, but these sudden demands and concessions alarmed me a little on her account.”

„It is only the suddenness of the proposal that embarrasses me,” said Ellieslaw; „but perhaps if she is found intractable, Sir Frederick will consider” —



„I will consider nothing, Mr Vere — your daughter's hand to-night, or I depart, were it at midnight — there is my ultimatum.”

„I embrace it,” said Ellieslaw; „and I will leave you to talk upon our military preparations, while I go to prepare my daughter for so sudden a change of condition.”

So saying, he left the company.



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## CHAPTER XIV.

*He brings Earl Osmond to receive my vows.  
O dreadful change! for Tancred, haughty  
Osmond.*

*Tancred and Sigismund.*

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MR VERE, whom long practice of dissimulation had enabled to model his very gait and footsteps to aid the purpose of deception, walked along the stone passage, and up the first flight of steps towards Miss Vere's apartment, with the alert, firm, and steady pace of one, who is bound, indeed, upon important business, but who entertains no doubt he can terminate his affairs satisfactorily. But when out of hearing of the gentlemen whom he had left, his step became so slow and irresolute, as to correspond with his doubts and his fears. At



length he paused in an antichamber to collect his ideas, and form his plan of argument before approaching his daughter.

“In what more hopeless and inextricable dilemma was ever an unfortunate man involved?” — Such was the tenor of his reflections. — “If we now fall to pieces by disunion, there can be little doubt that the government will take my life as the prime agitator of the insurrection. Or, grant I could stoop to save myself by a hasty submission, am I not, even in that case, utterly ruined? I have broken irreconcilably with Ratcliffe, and can have nothing to expect from that quarter but insult and persecution. I must wander forth an impoverished and dishonoured man, without even the means of sustaining life, far less wealth sufficient to counterbalance the infamy which my countrymen, both those whom I desert and those whom I join, will attach to the name of the political renegade. It is not to be thought of. And yet, what choice remains between this lot and the ignominious scaffold? Nothing can save me but reconciliation with these men; and, to accomplish this, I have promised to Langley that Isabella shall marry him ere midnight, and to Mareschal, that she shall do so



without compulsion. I have but one remedy betwixt me and ruin — her consent to take a suitor whom she dislikes, upon such short notice as would disgust her even were he a favoured lover — But I must trust to the romantic generosity of her disposition; and let me paint the necessity of her obedience ever so strongly, I cannot overcharge its reality.”

Having finished this sad chain of reflections upon his perilous condition, he entered his daughter's apartment, with every nerve bent up to the support of the argument which he was about to sustain. Though a deceitful and ambitious man, he was not so devoid of natural affection but that he was shocked at the part he was about to act, in practising on the feelings of a dutiful and affectionate child; but the recollections, that, if he succeeded, his daughter would only be trepanned into an advantageous match, and that, if he failed, he himself was a lost man, were quite sufficient to drown all scruples.

He found Miss Vere seated by the window of her dressing-room, her head reclining on her hand, and either sunk in slumber, or so deeply engaged in meditation, that she did not



hear the noise he made at his entrance. He approached with his features composed to a deep expression of sorrow and sympathy, and, sitting down beside her, solicited her attention by quietly taking her hand, a motion which he did not fail to accompany with a deep sigh.

"My father!" said Isabella, with a sort of start, which expressed at least as much fear, as joy or affection.

"Yes, Isabella," said Vere, "your unhappy father, who comes now as a penitent to crave forgiveness of his daughter for an injury done to her in the excess of his affection, and then to take leave of her for ever."

"Sir? Offence to me? Take leave for ever? What does all this mean?" said Miss Vere.

"Yes, Isabella, I am serious. But first let me ask you, have you no suspicion that I may have been privy to the strange chance which befel you yesterday morning?"

"You, sir?" answered Isabella, stammering, between a consciousness that he had guessed her thoughts justly, and the shame as well as



fear which forbade her to acknowledge a suspicion so degrading and so unnatural.

“Yes!” he continued, “your hesitation confesses that you entertained such an opinion, and I have now the painful task of confessing that your suspicions have done me no injustice. But listen to my motives. In an evil hour I countenanced the addresses of Sir Frederick Langley, conceiving it impossible that you could have any permanent objections to a match where the advantages were, in most respects, on your side. In a worse, I entered with him into measures calculated to restore our banished monarch, and the independence of my country. He has taken advantage of my unguarded confidence, and now has my life at his disposal.”

“Your life, sir?” said Isabella, faintly.

“Yes, Isabella, the life of him who gave life to you. So soon as I foresaw the excesses into which his headlong passion (for, to do him justice, I believe his unreasonable conduct arises from excess of attachment to you) was like to hurry him, I endeavoured, by finding a plausible pretext for your absence for some weeks, to extricate myself from the dilemma



in which I am placed. For this purpose, I wished, in case your objections to the match continued insurmountable, to have sent you privately for a few months to the convent of your maternal aunt at Paris. By a series of mistakes you have been brought from the place of secrecy and security which I had destined for your temporary abode. Fate has baffled my last chance of escape, and I have only to give you my blessing, and send you from the castle with Mr Ratcliffe, who now leaves it — my own fate will soon be decided.”

“Good Heaven, sir! can this be possible?” exclaimed Isabella. “O, why was I freed from the restraint in which you placed me? or why did you not impart your pleasure to me?”

“Think an instant, Isabella. Would you have had me prejudice in your opinion the friend I was most desirous of serving, by communicating to you the injurious eagerness with which he pursued his object? Could I do so honourably, having promised to assist his suit? — But it is all over. I and Mareschal have made up our minds to die like men; it only remains to send you from hence under a safe escort.”



“Great powers! and is there no remedy?”

“None, my child.” answered Vere, gently, “unless one which you would not advise your father to adopt — to be the first to betray his friends.”

“O, no! no!” she answered abhorrently yet hastily, as if to reject the temptation which the alternative presented to her. “But is there no other hope — through flight — through mediation — through supplication? — I will bend my knee to Sir Frederick!”

“It would be fruitless degradation; he is determined on his course, and I am equally resolved to stand the hazard of my fate — on one condition only he will turn aside from his purpose, and that condition my lips shall never utter to you.”

“Name it, I conjure you, my dear father! What can he ask that we ought not to grant, to prevent the hideous catastrophe with which you are threatened?”

“That, Isabella,” said Vere, solemnly, “you shall never know until your father’s head has



rolled on the bloody scaffold; then indeed you will learn there was one sacrifice by which he might have been saved."

"And why not speak it now? Do you fear I would flinch from the sacrifice of fortune for your preservation? or would you bequeath me the bitter legacy of livelong remorse so oft as I shall think that you perished while there remained one mode of preventing the dreadful misfortune that overhangs you?"

"Then, my child," said Vere, "since you press me to name what I would a thousand times rather leave in silence, I must inform you that he will accept for ransom nothing but your hand in marriage, and that conferred before midnight this very evening."

"This evening, sir? — and to such a man! — a man? — a monster, who could wish to win the daughter by threatening the life of the father — it is impossible!"

"You say right, my child," answered her father, "it is indeed impossible; nor have I either the right or the wish to exact such a sacrifice — It is the course of nature that the



old should die and be forgot, and the young should live and be happy."

"My father die, and his child can save him! — but no — no — my dear father, pardon me, it is impossible; you only desire to guide me to your wishes. I know your object is what you think my happiness, and this dreadful tale is only told to influence my conduct and subdue my scruples."

"My daughter," replied Ellieslaw, in a tone where offended authority seemed to struggle with parental affection, "my child suspects me of inventing a false tale to work upon her feelings! Even this I must bear, and even from this unworthy suspicion I must descend to vindicate myself. You know the stainless honour of your cousin Mareschal — mark what I shall write to him, and judge from his answer, if the danger in which we stand is not real, and whether I have not used every means to avert it."

He sate down, wrote a few lines hastily, and handed them to Isabella, who, after repeated and painful efforts, cleared her eyes and head sufficiently to discern their purport.



“Dear Cousin,” said the billet, “I find my daughter, as I expected, in despair at the untimely and premature urgency of Sir Frederick Langley. She cannot even comprehend the peril in which we stand, or how much we are in his power — Use your influence with him, for Heaven’s sake, to modify proposals to the acceptance of which I cannot, and will not, urge my child against all her own feelings, as well as those of delicacy and propriety, and oblige your loving Cousin, — R. V.”

In the agitation of the moment, when her swimming eyes and dizzy brain could hardly comprehend the sense of what she looked upon, it is not surprising that Miss Vere should have omitted to remark that this letter seemed to rest her scruples rather upon the form and time of the proposed union, than on a rooted dislike to the suitor proposed to her. Mr Vere rang the bell, and gave the letter to a servant to be delivered to Mr Mareschal, and, rising from his chair, continued to traverse the apartment in silence and in great agitation until the answer was returned. He glanced it over, and wrung the hand of his daughter as he gave it to her. The tenor was as follows: —



“My dear kinsman, I have already urged the knight on the point you mention, and I find him as fixed as Cheviot. I am truly sorry my fair cousin should be pressed to give up any of her maidenly rights. Sir Frederick consents, however, to leave the castle with me the instant the ceremony is performed, and we will raise our followers and begin the fray. Thus there is great hope the bridegroom may be knocked on the head before he and the bride can meet again, so Bell has a fair chance to be Lady Langley *à très bon marché*. For the rest, I can only say, that if she can make up her mind to the alliance at all — it is no time for mere maiden ceremony — my pretty cousin must needs consent to marry in haste, or we shall all repent at leisure, or rather have very little leisure to repent, which is all at present from him who rests your affectionate kinsman, — R. M.”

“P. S. Tell Isabella that I would rather cut the knight's throat after all, and end the dilemma that way, than see her constrained to marry him against her will.”

When Isabella had read this letter, it dropped from her hand, and she would, at the same



time, have fallen from her chair, had she not been supported by her father.

“My God, my child will die!” exclaimed Vere, the feelings of nature overcoming, even in *his* breast, the sentiments of selfish policy; “look up, Isabella — look up, my child — come what will, you shall not be the sacrifice — I will fall myself with the consciousness I leave you happy — My child may weep on my grave, but she shall not — not in this instance — reproach my memory.” He called a servant. — “Go, bid Ratcliffe come hither directly.”

During this interval, Miss Vere became deadly pale, clenched her hands, pressing the palms strongly together, closed her eyes, and drew her lips with strong compression, as if the severe constraint which she put upon her external feelings extended even to her muscular organization. — Then raising her head, and drawing in her breath strongly ere she spoke, she said, with firmness, — “Father, I consent to the marriage.”

“You shall not — you shall not, my child



— my dear child — you shall not embrace certain misery to free me from uncertain danger.”

So exclaimed Ellieslaw; and, strange and inconstant beings that we are! he expressed the real though momentary feelings of his heart.

“Father,” repeated Isabella, “I will consent to this marriage.”

“No, my child, no — not now at least — we will humble ourselves to obtain delay from him; and yet, Isabella, could you overcome a dislike which has no real foundation, think, in other respects, what a match — wealth — rank — importance.”

“Father!” reiterated Isabella, “I have consented.”

It seemed as if she had lost the power of saying any thing else, or even of varying the phrase which, with such effort, she had compelled herself to utter.

“Heaven bless thee, my child! — Heaven bless thee! — And it will bless thee with riches, with pleasure, with power.”



Miss Vere faintly entreated to be left by herself for the rest of the evening.

“But will you not receive Sir Frederick?” said her father anxiously.

“I will meet him,” she replied, “I will meet him — when I must, and where I must, but spare me now.”

“Be it so, my dearest; you shall know no restraint that I can save you from. Do not think too hardly of Sir Frederick for this, it is an excess of passion.”

Isabella waved her hand impatiently.

“Forgive me, my child — I go — Heaven bless thee. At eleven — if you call me not before — at eleven I come to seek you.”

When he left Isabella she dropped upon her knees — “Heaven aid me to support the resolution I have taken — Heaven only can — O, poor Earnscliff! who shall comfort him? and with what contempt he will pronounce her name who listened to him to-day and gave herself to another at night. But let him despise



me — better so than that he should know the truth — Let him despise me; if it will but lessen his grief, I should feel comfort in the loss of his esteem."

She wept bitterly; attempting in vain, from time to time, to commence the prayer for which she had sunk on her knees, but unable to calm her spirits sufficiently for the exercise of devotion. As she remained in this agony of mind, the door of her apartment was slowly opened.



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## CHAPTER XVI.

*The darksome cave they enter, where they found  
The woful man, low sitting on the ground,  
Musing full sadly in his sullen mind.*

*Faery Queen.*

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THE intruder on Miss Vere's sorrows was Ratcliffe. Ellieslaw had, in the agitation of his mind, forgotten to countermand the order he had given to call him thither, so that he opened the door with the words, "You sent for me, Mr Vere." Then looking around — "Miss Vere, alone! on the ground! and in tears!"

"Leave me — leave me, Mr Ratcliffe," said the unhappy young lady.

"I must not leave you," said Ratcliffe; "I have been repeatedly requesting admittance to



take my leave of you, and have been refused, until your father himself sent for me. Blame me not, if I am bold and intrusive; I have a duty to discharge which makes me so."

"I cannot listen to you — I cannot speak to you, Mr Ratcliffe; take my best wishes, and, for God's sake, leave me."

"Tell me only, is it true that this monstrous match is to go forward, and this very night? I heard the servants proclaim it as I was on the great stair-case — I heard the directions given to clear out the chapel."

"Spare me, Mr Ratcliffe; and, from the state in which you see me, judge of the cruelty of these questions."

"Married? to Sir Frederick Langley? and this night? It must not — cannot — shall not be."

"It *must* be, Mr Ratcliffe, or my father is ruined."

"Ah! I understand," answered Ratcliffe; "and you have sacrificed yourself to save him who — but let the virtue of the child atone for his



faults — What *can* be done? Time presses — I know but one remedy — with four-and-twenty hours I might find many — Miss Vere, you must implore the protection of the only human being who has it in his power to controul the course of events which threatens to hurry you before it.”

“And what human being,” answered Miss Vere, “has such power?”

“Stare not when I name him,” said Ratcliffe, coming near her, and speaking in a low but distinct voice. “It is he who is called Elshender the Recluse of Mucklestane-Moor.”

“You are mad, Mr Ratcliffe, or you mean to insult my misery by an ill-timed jest!”

“I am as much in my senses, young lady, as you are; and I am no idle jester, far less with misery, least of all with your misery. I swear to you that this being (who is other far than what he seems) actually possesses the means of redeeming you from this hateful union.”

“And of insuring my father’s safety?”



“Yes! even that,” said Ratcliffe, “if you plead his cause with him — yet how to obtain admittance?”

“Fear not that,” said Miss Vere, suddenly recollecting the incident of the rose; “I remember he desired me to call upon him for aid in my extremity, and gave me this flower as a token. Ere it faded away entirely, I would need, he said, his assistance; is it possible his words can have been aught but the ravings of insanity?”

“Doubt it not — fear it not — but, above all,” said Ratcliffe, “let us lose no time — Are you at liberty and unwatched?”

“I believe so,” said Isabella; “but what would you have me do?”

“Leave the castle instantly, and throw yourself at the feet of this extraordinary man, who, in circumstances that seem to argue the extremity of the most contemptible poverty, possesses yet an almost absolute influence over your fate — Guests and servants are deep in their carouse — the leaders sitting in conclave on their treasonable schemes — my horse stands



ready in the stable — I will saddle one for you, and meet you at the little gardengate — O, let no doubt of my prudence or fidelity prevent your taking the only step in your power to escape the dreadful fate which must attend the wife of Sir Frederick Langley!”

“Mr Ratcliffe,” said Miss Vere, “you have always been esteemed a man of honour and probity, and a drowning wretch will always catch at the feeblest twig — I will trust you — I will follow your advice — I will meet you at the garden-gate.”

She bolted the outer-door of her apartment as soon as Mr Ratcliffe left her, and descended to the garden by a separate stair of communication which opened to her dressing-room. On the way she felt inclined to retract the consent she had so hastily given to a plan so hopeless and extravagant. But as she passed in her descent a private door which entered into the chapel from the back-stair, she heard the voice of the female-servants as they were employed in the task of cleaning it.

„Married! and to sae bad a man — Ewhow, sirs! ony thing rather than that.”



„They are right — they are right,” said Miss Vere, „any thing rather than that.”

She hurried to the garden. Mr Ratcliffe was true to his appointment — the horses stood saddled at the garden gate, and in a few minutes they were advancing rapidly toward the hut of the Solitary.

While the ground was favourable, the speed of their journey was such as to prevent much communication; but when a steep ascent compelled them to slacken their pace, a new cause of apprehension occurred to Miss Vere's mind.

„Mr Ratcliffe,” she said, pulling up her horse's bridle, „let us prosecute no farther a journey, which nothing but the extreme agitation of my mind can vindicate my having undertaken — I am well aware that this man passes among the vulgar as being possessed of supernatural powers, and carrying on an intercourse with beings of another world; but I would have you aware I am neither to be imposed on by such follies, nor, were I to believe in their existence, durst I, with my feelings of religion, apply to this being in my distress.”



“I should have thought, Miss Vere,” replied Ratcliffe, “my character and habits of thinking were so well known to you, that you might have held me exculpated from crediting such absurdity.”

“But in what other mode can a being so miserable himself in appearance possess the power of assisting me?”

“Miss Vere,” said Ratcliffe, after a momentary pause, “I am bound by a solemn oath of secrecy — You must, without farther explanation, be satisfied with my solemn assurance, that he does possess the power, if you can inspire him with the will, and that I doubt not.”

“Mr Ratcliffe,” said Miss Vere, “you may yourself be mistaken; you ask an unlimited degree of confidence from me.”

“Recollect, Miss Vere,” he replied “that when, in your humanity, you asked me to interfere with your father in favour of Haswell and his ruined family — when you requested me to prevail on him to do a thing most abhorrent to his nature — to forgive an injury and remit a penalty — I stipulated that you



should ask me no questions concerning the sources of my influence — You found no reason to distrust me then, do not distrust me now."

"But the extraordinary mode of life of this man," said Miss Vere; "his seclusion — his figure — the deepness of misanthropy which he is said to express in his language — Mr Ratcliffe, what can I think of him, if he really possesses the powers you ascribe to him?"

"This man, young lady, was bred a catholic, a sect which affords a thousand instances of those who have retired from power and affluence to voluntary privations more strict even than his."

"But he avows no religious motive."

"No," replied Ratcliffe; "disgust with the world has operated his retreat from it without assuming the veil of superstition. Thus far I may tell you — He was born to great wealth, which his parents designed should become greater by his union with a kinswoman, whom for that purpose they bred up in their own house — You have seen his figure; judge what the young



lady must have thought of the lot to which she was destined — Yet, habituated to his appearance, she showed no reluctance, and the friends of — of the person whom I speak of, doubted not that the excess of his attachment, the various acquisitions of his mind, his many and amiable qualities, had overcome the natural horror which his destined bride must have entertained at an exterior so dreadfully inauspicious."

"And did they judge truly?"

"You shall hear. He at least was fully aware of his own deficiency; the sense of it haunted him like a phantom. 'I am,' was his own expression to me, — I mean to a man whom he trusted, — 'I am, in spite of what you would say, a poor miserable outcast, fitter to have been smothered in the cradle than to have been brought up to scare the world in which I crawl.' The person whom he addressed in vain endeavoured to impress him with the indifference to external form, which is the natural result of philosophy, or entreat him to recal the superiority of mental talents to the more attractive attributes that are merely personal. 'I hear you,' he would reply; 'but you speak the voice of coldblooded Stoicism, or, at least,



of friendly partiality. But look at every look which we have read, those excepted of that abstract philosophy which feels no responsive voice in our natural feelings. Is not personal form, such as at least can be tolerated without horror and disgust, always represented as essential to our ideas of a friend, far more a lover? Is not such a mutilated monster as I am, excluded, by the very fiat of Nature, from her fairest enjoyments? What but my wealth prevents all — perhaps even Letitia, or you, from shunning me as something foreign to your nature, and more odious, by bearing that distorted resemblance to humanity which we observe in the animal tribes that are more hateful to man because they seem his caricature?"

"You repeat the sentiments of a madman," said Miss Vere.

"No," replied her conductor, "unless a morbid and excessive sensibility on such a subject can be termed insanity. Yet I will not deny that this governing feeling and apprehension carried the person who entertained it, to lengths which indicated a deranged imagination. He appeared to think that it was necessary for him, by exuberant and not always well-chosen in-



stances of liberality, and even profusion, to unite himself to the human race, from which he conceived himself naturally dissevered. The benefits which he bestowed, from a disposition naturally philanthropical in an uncommon degree, were exaggerated by the influence of the goading reflection, that more was necessary from him than from others, as if it were to reconcile mankind to receive him into their class. It is scarcely necessary to say, that the bounty which flowed from a source so capricious was often abused, and his confidence frequently betrayed. These disappointments which occur to all, more or less, and most to such as confer benefits without just discrimination, his diseased fancy set down to the hatred and contempt excited by his personal deformity. But I fatigue you, Miss Vere."

"No; by no means, I — I could not prevent my attention from wandering an instant; pray proceed."

"He became at length," continued Ratcliffe, "the most ingenious self-tormentor of whom I have ever heard; the scoff of the rabble, and the sneer of the yet more brutal vulgar of his own rank, was to him agony and breaking



on the wheel. He regarded the laugh of the common people whom he passed on the street, and the suppressed titter, or yet more offensive terror, of the girl to whom he was introduced in company, as proofs of the true sense which the world entertained of him, as a prodigy unfit to be received among them on the usual terms of society, and as vindicating the wisdom of his purpose in withdrawing himself from among them. On the faith and sincerity of two persons alone, he seemed to rely implicitly — on that of his betrothed bride, and of a friend eminently gifted in personal accomplishments, who seemed, and indeed was probably, sincerely attached to him. He ought to have been so, at least, for he was literally loaded with benefits by him whom you are now about to see. The parents of the subject of my story died within a short space of each other. Their death postponed the marriage, for which the day had been fixed. The lady did not seem greatly to mourn this delay; perhaps that was not to have been expected, but she intimated no change of intention, when, after a decent interval, a second day was named for their union. The friend of whom I spoke was then a constant resident at the Hall. In an evil hour, at the earnest request and



entreaty of this friend, they joined a general party, where men of different political opinions were mingled, and where they drank deep. A quarrel ensued; the friend drew his sword with others, and was thrown down and disarmed by a more powerful antagonist. They fell in the struggle at the feet of the Recluse, who, maimed and truncated as his form appears, possesses, nevertheless, great strength, as well as strong passions. He caught up a sword, pierced the heart of his friend's antagonist, was tried, and his life, with difficulty, redeemed from justice at the expence of a year's close imprisonment, the punishment of manslaughter. The incident affected him most deeply, the more that the deceased was a man of excellent character, and had sustained gross insult and injury ere he drew his sword. — I think, from that moment, I observed — I beg pardon. The fits of morbid sensibility which had tormented this unfortunate gentleman, were rendered henceforth more acute by remorse, which he, of all men, was least capable of having incurred, or of restraining when it became his unhappy lot. His paroxysms of agony could not be concealed from the lady to whom he was betrothed; and it must be confessed they were of an alarming and fearful nature. He comforted himself, that



at the expiry of his imprisonment, he could form with his wife and friend a society, encircled by which he might dispense with more extensive communication with the world. He was deceived; before that term elapsed, his friend and his betrothed bride were man and wife. The effects of a shock so dreadful on an ardent temperament, a disposition already soured by bitter remorse, and loosened by the indulgence of a gloomy imagination from the rest of mankind, I cannot describe to you; it was as if the last cable at which the vessel rode had suddenly parted, and left her abandoned to all the wild fury of the tempest. He was placed under restraint. As a temporary measure this might have been justifiable; but his hard-hearted friend, who, in consequence of his marriage, was now his nearest ally, prolonged his confinement, in order to enjoy the management of his immense estates. There was one who owed his all to the sufferer, an humble friend, but grateful and faithful. By unceasing exertion, and repeated invocation of justice, he at length succeeded in obtaining his patron's freedom, and re-instatement in the management of his own property, to which was soon added that of his intended bride, who, having died without male issue, her estates reverted to him, as heir of entail. But



freedom and wealth were unable to restore the equipoise of his mind; the first he despised, the last only served him as far as it afforded him the means of indulging his strange and wayward fancy. He had renounced the Catholic religion, but perhaps some of its doctrines continued to influence his mind, over which remorse and misanthropy now assumed, in appearance, an unbounded authority. His life has since been that alternately of a pilgrim and a hermit, suffering the most severe privations, not indeed in ascetic devotion, but in abhorrence of mankind. Yet no man's words and actions have been at such a wide difference, nor has any hypocritical wretch ever been more ingenious in assigning good motives for his vile actions, than this unfortunate in reconciling to his abstract principles of misanthropy, a conduct which flows from his natural generosity and kindness of feeling."

"Still, Mr Ratcliffe — still, you describe the inconsistencies of a madman."

"By no means," replied Ratcliffe; "that the imagination of this gentleman is disordered, I will not pretend to dispute; I have already told you that it has sometimes broken out into paroxysms approaching to real mental alienation. But it is of his common state of mind that I



speak; it is irregular, but not deranged; the shades are as gradual as those that divide the light of noon-day from midnight. The courtier who ruins his fortune for the attainment of a title which can do him no good, or power of which he can make no suitable or creditable use, the miser who hoards his useless wealth and the prodigal who squanders it, are all marked with a certain shade of insanity. To criminals who are guilty of enormities, when the temptation to a sober mind bears no proportion to the horror of the act, or the probability of detection and punishment, the same observation applies; and all violent passions, as well as anger, may be termed a short madness."

"This may be all good philosophy, Mr Ratcliffe," answered Miss Vere; "but, excuse me, it by no means emboldens me to visit, at this late hour, a person whose extravagance of imagination you yourself can only palliate."

"Rather, then," said Ratcliffe, "receive my solemn assurances that you do not incur the slightest danger. But what I have been hitherto afraid to mention for fear of alarming you, is, that now, when we are within sight of his retreat, for I can discover it through the twilight, I must go no farther with you; you must proceed alone."



“Alone? — I dare not.”

“You must,” continued Ratcliffe; “I will remain here and wait for you.”

“You will not then stir from this place,” said Miss Vere; “yet the distance is so great, you could not hear me were I to cry for assistance.”

“Fear nothing,” said her guide; “or observe, at least, the utmost caution in stifling every expression of timidity. Remember that his predominant and most harassing apprehension arises from a consciousness of the hideousness of his appearance. Your path lies straight beside yon half-fallen willow; keep the left side of it; the marsh lies on the right. Farewell for a time. Remember the evil you are threatened with, and let it overcome at once your fears and scruples.”

“Mr Ratcliffe,” said Isabella, “farewell; if you have deceived one so unfortunate as myself, you have forfeited the fair character for probity and honour to which I have trusted.”

“On my life — on my soul,” continued Ratcliffe, raising his voice as the distance between them increased, “you are safe — perfectly safe.”

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## CHAPTER XVI.

— 'Twas time and griefs  
That framed him thus: Time, with his fairer  
hand,  
Offering the fortunes of his former days,  
The former man may make him — Bring us to  
him,  
And chance it as it may.

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THE sounds of Ratcliffe's voice had died on Isabella's ear; but as she frequently looked back, it was some encouragement to her to discern his form now darkening in the gloom. Ere, however, she went much farther, she lost the object in the increasing shade. The last glimmer of the twilight placed her before the hut of the Solitary. She twice extended her hand to the door, and twice she withdrew it, and when she did at length make the effort, the knock did not equal in violence the throb of her own bosom. Her next effort was louder;



her third was reiterated, for the fear of not obtaining the protection from which Ratcliffe promised so much, began to overpower the terrors of his presence from whom she was to request it. At length, as she still received no answer, she repeatedly called upon the Dwarf by his assumed name, and requested him to answer and open to her.

“What miserable being is reduced,” said the appalling voice of the Solitary, “to seek refuge here? Go hence; when the heath-fowl need shelter, they seek it not in the nest of the night-raven.”

“I come to you, father,” said Isabella, “in my hour of adversity, even as you yourself commanded, when you promised your heart and your door should be open to my distress; but I fear” —

“Ha!” said the Solitary, “then thou art Isabella Vere; give me a token that thou art she.”

“I have brought you back the rose which you gave me; it has not had time to fade ere the hard fate you foretold has come upon me!”

“And if thou hast thus redeemed thy pledge,” said the Dwarf, “I will not forfeit mine. The



heart and the door that are shut against every other earthly being *shall* be open to thee and to thy sorrows."

She heard him move in his hut, and presently afterwards strike a light. One by one, bolt and bar were then withdrawn, the heart of Isabella throbbing higher as these obstacles to their meeting were successively removed. The door opened, and the Solitary stood before her, his uncouth form and features illuminated by the iron lamp which he held in his hand.

"Enter, daughter of affliction," he said, —  
"enter the house of misery."

She entered, and with a precaution which increased her trepidation. The Recluse's first act, after setting the lamp upon the table, was to replace the numerous bolts which secured the door of his hut. She shrunk as she heard the noise which accompanied this ominous operation, yet remembered Ratcliffe's caution, and endeavoured to suppress all appearance of apprehension. The light of the lamp was weak and uncertain; but the Recluse, without taking immediate notice of Isabella, otherwise than by motioning her to sit down on a small settle beside the fireplace, made haste to kindle some



dry furze, which presently cast a blaze through the cottage. Wooden shelves, which bore a few books, some bundles of dried herbs, and one or two cups and platters, were on one side of the fire; on the other were placed the ordinary tools of field-labour, mixed with those used by mechanics. Where the bed should have been, there was a wooden frame, strewed with withered moss and rushes, the couch of the ascetic. The whole space of the cottage did not exceed ten feet by six within the walls; and its only furniture, besides what we have mentioned, were a table and two stools formed of rough deal.

Within these narrow precincts Isabella now found herself enclosed with a being whose history had nothing to reassure her, and the fearful conformation of whose hideous countenance inspired an almost superstitious terror. He occupied the seat opposite to her, and dropping his huge and shaggy eyebrows over his piercing black eyes, gazed at her in silence, as if agitated by a variety of contending feelings. On the other side sate Isabella, pale as death, her long hair uncurled by the evening damps, and falling over her shoulders and breast, as the wet streamers droop from the mast when the



storm has passed away, and left the vessel stranded on the beach. The Dwarf first broke the silence with the sudden, abrupt, and alarming question, — "Woman, what evil fate has brought thee hither?"

"My father's danger, and your own command," she replied faintly, but firmly.

"And you hope for aid from me?"

"If you can bestow it," she replied, still in the same tone of mild submission.

"And how should I possess that power?" continued the Dwarf, with a bitter sneer; "Is mine the form of a redresser of wrongs? Is this the castle in which one powerful enough to be sued to by a fair suppliant is likely to hold his residence? I but mocked thee, girl, when I said I would relieve thee."

"Then must I depart, and face my fate as I best may!"

"No!" said the Dwarf, rising and interposing between her and the door, and motioning to her sternly to resume her seat — "No! you leave me not in this way; we must have farther conference. Why should one being desire aid of another? Why should not each be sufficient



to itself? Look round you — I, the most despised and most decrepit on Nature's common, have required sympathy and help from no one. These stones are of my own piling; these utensils I framed with my own hands; and with this" — and he laid his hand with a fierce smile on the long dagger which he always wore beneath his garment, and unsheathed it so far that the blade glimmered clear in the fire-light — "With this," he pursued, as he thrust the weapon back into the scabbard, "I can, if necessary, defend the vital spark enclosed in this poor trunk, against the fairest and strongest that shall threaten me with injury."

It was with difficulty Isabella refrained from screaming out aloud; but she *did* refrain.

"This," continued the Recluse, "is the life of nature, solitary, self-sufficing, and independent. The wolf calls not the wolf to aid him in forming his den; and the vulture invites not another to assist her in striking down her prey."

"And when they are unable to procure themselves support," said Isabella, judiciously thinking that he would be most accessible to argument couched in his own metaphorical style, "what, then, is to befall them?"



“Let them starve, die, and be forgotten; it is the common lot of humanity.”

“It is the lot of the wild tribes of nature,” said Isabella; “but chiefly of those who are destined to support themselves by rapine, which brooks no partner; but it is not the law of nature in general; even the lower orders have confederacies for mutual defence. But mankind — the race would perish did they cease to aid each other. — From the time that the mother binds the child’s head, till the moment that some kind assistant wipes the death-damp from the brow of the dying, we cannot exist without mutual help. All, therefore, that need aid, have right to ask it of their fellow-mortals; no one who has the power of granting, can refuse it without guilt.”

“And in this simple hope, poor maiden,” said the Solitary, “thou hast come into the desert, to seek one whose wish it were that the league thou hast spoken of were broken for ever, and that, in very truth, the whole race should perish! Wert thou not frightened?”

“Misery,” said Isabella, firmly, “is superior to fear.”

“Hast thou not heard it said in thy mortal



world, that I have leagued myself with other powers, deformed so the eye and malevolent to the human race as myself? Hast thou not heard this? And doest thou seek my cell at midnight?"

"The Being I worship supports me against such idle fears," said Isabella; but the increasing agitation of her bosom belied the affected courage which her words expressed.

"Ho! ho!" said the Dwarf, "thou vauntest thyself a philosopher? Yet, should'st thou not have thought of the danger of entrusting thyself, young and beautiful, in the power of one so spited against humanity, as to place his chief pleasure in defacing, destroying, and degrading her fairest works?"

Isabella, much alarmed, continued to answer, with firmness, "Whatever injuries you may have sustained in the world, you are incapable of revenging them on one, who never wronged you, nor, wilfully, any other."

"Ay, but maiden," he continued, his dark eyes flashing with an expression of malignity which communicated itself to his wild and distorted features, "revenge is the hungry wolf, which asks only to tear flesh and lap blood.



Think you the lamb's plea of innocence would be listened to by him?"

"Man!" said Isabella, rising and expressing herself with much dignity, "I fear not the horrible ideas with which you would impress me. I cast them from me with disdain. Be you mortal or fiend, you would not offer injury to one who sought you as a suppliant in her utmost need. You would not — you durst not."

"Thou say'st truly, maiden," rejoined the Solitary; "I dare not — I would not. Begone to thy dwelling. Fear nothing with which they threaten thee. Thou hast asked my protection — thou shalt find it effectual."

"But, father, this very night I have consented to wed the man that I abhor, or I must put the seal to my father's ruin."

"This night? — at what hour?"

"Ere midnight."

"And twilight," said the Dwarf, "has already passed away. But fear nothing, there is ample time to protect thee."

"And my father?" continued Isabella, in a suppliant tone.



„Thy father,” replied the Dwarf, „has been, and is, my most bitter enemy. But fear not; thy virtue shall save him. And now, begone; were I to keep thee longer by me, I might again fall into the stupid dreams concerning human worth, from which I have been so fearfully awakened. But fear nothing — at the very foot of the altar I will redeem thee. Adieu, time presses, and I must act!”

He led her to the door of the hut, which he opened for her departure. She remounted her horse, which had been feeding in the outer enclosure, and pressed him forward by the light of the moon, which was now rising, to the spot where she had left Ratcliffe.

„Have you succeeded?” was his first eager question.

„I have obtained promises from him to whom you sent me; but how can he possibly accomplish them?”

„Thank God!” said Ratcliffe; „doubt not his power to fulfil his promise.”

¶ At this moment a shrill whistle was heard to resound along the heath.



„Hark!” said Ratcliffe, „he calls me — Miss Vere, return home, and leave unbolted the postern door of the garden; to that which opens on the back-stairs I have a private key.”

A second whistle was heard, yet more shrill and prolonged than the first.

„I come, I come,” said Ratcliffe; and, setting spurs to his horse, rode over the heath in the direction of the Recluse’s hut. Miss Vere returned to the castle, the mettle of the animal on which she rode, and her own anxiety of mind, combining to accelerate her journey.

She obeyed Ratcliffe’s directions, though without well apprehending their purpose, and leaving her horse at large in a paddock near the garden, hurried to her own apartment, which she reached without observation. She now unbolted her door, and rang her bell for lights. Her father appeared along with the servant who answered her summons.

„He had been twice,” he said, „listening at her door during the two hours that had elapsed since he left her, and, not hearing her speak, had become apprehensive that she was taken ill.”



„And now, my dear father,” she said, „permit me to claim the promise you so kindly gave; let the last moments of freedom which I am to enjoy be mine without interruption; and protract to the last moment the respite which is allowed me.”

„I will,” said her father; „nor shall you be again interrupted. But this disordered dress — this dishevelled hair — do not let me find you thus when I call on you again; the sacrifice to be beneficial must be voluntary.”

„Must it be so?” she replied; „then fear not, my father, the victim shall be adorned.”



  
**CHAPTER XVII.**

*This looks not like a nuptial.*

*Much ado about Nothing.*

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THE chapel in the castle of Ellicslaw, destined to be the scene of this ill-omened union, was a building of much older date than the castle itself, though that claimed considerable antiquity. Before the wars between England and Scotland had become so common and of such long duration, that the buildings along both sides of the Border were chiefly dedicated to warlike purposes, there had been a small settlement of monks at Ellieslaw, a dependency, it is believed by antiquaries, upon the rich Abbey of Jedburgh. Their possessions had long passed away under the changes introduced by war and mutual ravage. A feudal castle had arisen on the ruins of their cells, and their chapel was included in its precincts.



The edifice, in its round arches and massive pillars, the simplicity of which referred their date to what has been called the Saxon architecture, presented at all times a dark and sombre appearance, and had been frequently used as the cemetery of the family of the feudal lords, as well as formerly of the monastic brethren. But it looked doubly gloomy by the glare of the few and smoky torches which were used to enlighten it upon the present occasion, and which, spreading a glare of yellow light in their immediate vicinity, were surrounded beyond by a red and purple halo reflected from their own smoke, and beyond that again by a zone of darkness which magnified the extent of the chapel, while it rendered it impossible for the eye to ascertain its limits. Some injudicious ornaments, adopted in haste for the occasion, rather added to the dreariness of the scene. Old fragments of tapestry, torn from the walls of other apartments, had been hastily and partially disposed around those of the chapel, and mingled inconsistently with scutcheons and funeral emblems of the dead, which they elsewhere exhibited. On each side of the stone altar was a monument, the appearance of which formed an equally strange contrast. On the one was the figure, in stone, of some grim hermit, or



monk, who had died in the odour of sanctity; he was represented as recumbent, in his cowl and scapulaire, with his face turned upward as in the act of devotion, and his hands folded, from which his string of beads were dependent. On the other side was a tomb, in the Italian taste, composed of the most beautiful statuary marble, and accounted a model of modern art. It was erected to the memory of Isabella's mother, the late Mrs Vere of Ellieslaw, who was represented as in a dying posture, while a weeping cherub, with eyes averted, seemed in the act of extinguishing a dying lamp as emblematic of her speedy dissolution. It was, indeed, a masterpiece of art, but misplaced in the rude vault to which it had been consigned. Many were surprised, and even scandalized, that Ellieslaw, not remarkable for attention to his lady while alive, should erect after her death such a costly mausoleum in affected sorrow; others cleared him from the imputation of hypocrisy, and averred that the monument was constructed under the direction and at the sole expence of Mr Ratcliffe.

Before these monuments the wedding guests were assembled. They were few in number; for many had left the castle to prepare for the en-

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suing political explosion, and Ellieslaw was, in the circumstances of the case, far from being desirous to extend invitations farther than to those near relations whose presence the custom of the country rendered indispensable. Next to the altar stood Sir Frederick Langley, dark, moody, and thoughtful, even beyond his wont, and near him, Mareschal, who was to play the part of bridesman, as it was called. The thoughtless humour of this young gentleman, on which he never deigned to place the least restraint, added to the cloud which overhung the brow of the bridegroom.

“The bride is not yet come out of her chamber,” he whispered to Sir Frederick; “I trust that we must not have recourse to the violent expedients of the Romans which I read of at college. It would be hard upon my pretty cousin to be run away with twice in two days, though I know none better worth such a violent compliment.”

Sir Frederick attempted to turn a deaf ear to this discourse, humming a tune and looking another way, but Mareschal proceeded in the same wild manner.

“This delay is hard upon Dr Hobbler, who



was disturbed to accelerate preparations for this joyful event when he had successfully extracted the cork of his third bottle. I hope you will keep him free of the censure of his superiors, for I take it this is beyond canonical hours. — But here come Ellieslaw and my pretty cousin — prettier than ever, I think, were it not she seems so faint and so deadly pale — Hark ye, Sir Knight, if she says not YES with right good will, it shall be no wedding for all that has come and gone yet.”

“No wedding, sir?” returned Sir Frederick, in a loud whisper, the tone of which indicated that his angry feelings were suppressed with difficulty.

“No — no marriage,” replied Mareschal, “there’s my hand and glove on’t.”

Sir Frederick Langley took his hand, and as he wrung it hard, said in a lower whisper, “Mareschal, you shall answer this,” and then flung his hand from him.

“That I will readily do,” said Mareschal, “for never word escaped my lips that my hand was not ready to guarantee — So, speak up, my



pretty cousin, and tell me if it be your free will and unbiassed resolution to accept of this gallant knight for your lord and husband; for if you have the tenth part of a scruple upon the subject, fall back, fall edge, he shall not have you."

"Are you mad, Mr Mareschal?" said Ellieslaw, who, having been this young man's guardian during his minority, often employed a tone of authority to him. "Do you suppose I would drag my daughter to the foot of the altar, were it not her own choice?"

"Tut, Ellieslaw," retorted the young gentleman, "never tell me of the contrary; her eyes are full of tears, and her cheeks are whiter than her white dress. I must insist, in the name of common humanity, that the ceremony be adjourned till to-morrow."

"She shall tell you herself, thou incorrigible intermeddler in what concerns thee not, that it is her wish the ceremony should go on. — Is it not, Isabella, my dear?"

"It is," said Isabella, half fainting — "since there is no help either in God or man."



The first words alone were distinctly audible. Mareschal shrugged up his shoulders and stepped back. Ellieslaw led, or rather supported, his daughter to the altar. Sir Frederick moved forward and placed himself by her side. The clergyman opened his prayer-book, and looked to Mr Vere for the signal to commence the service.

“Proceed,” said the latter.

But a voice, as if proceeding from the tomb of his deceased wife, called, in such loud and harsh accents as awakened every echo in the vaulted chapel, “Forbear!”

All were mute and motionless, till a distant rustle, and the clash of swords or something resembling it, was heard from the distant apartments. It ceased almost instantly.

“What new device is this?” said Sir Frederick, fiercely, eyeing Ellieslaw and Mareschal with a glance of malignant suspicion.

“It can be but the frolic of some intemperate guest,” said Ellieslaw, though greatly confounded; “we must make large allowances for the excess of this evening’s festivity. Proceed with the service.”



Before the clergyman could obey, the same prohibition which they had before heard, was repeated from the same spot. The female attendants screamed, and fled from the chapel; the gentlemen laid their hands on their swords. Ere the first moment of surprise had passed by, the Dwarf stepped from behind the monument, and placed himself full in front of Mr Vere. The effect of so strange and hideous an apparition, in such place and circumstances, appalled all present, but seemed to annihilate the Laird of Ellieslaw, who, dropping his daughter's arm, staggered against the nearest pillar, and, clasping it with his hands as if for support, laid his brow against the column.

“Who is this fellow?” said Sir Frederick; “and what does he mean by this intrusion?”

“It is one who comes to tell you,” said the Dwarf, with the peculiar acrimony which usually marked his manner, “that, in marrying that young lady, you wed neither the heiress of Ellieslaw, nor of Mauley-Hall, nor of Polverton, nor of one furrow of land, unless she marries with my consent; and to thee that consent shall never be given. Down — down on thy knees, and thank Heaven that thou art prevented from



wedding qualities with which thou hast no concern — portionless truth, virtue, and innocence. — And thou, base ingrate," he continued, addressing himself to Ellieslaw, "what is thy wretched subterfuge now? Thou, who would'st sell thy daughter to relieve thee from danger, as in famine thou would'st have slain and devoured her to preserve thy own vile life! Ay, hide thy face with thy hands; well may'st thou blush to look on him, whose body thou did'st consign to chains, his hand to guilt, and his soul to misery. Saved once more by the virtue of her who calls thee father, go hence! and may the pardon and benefits I confer on thee prove literal coals of fire, till thy brain is seared and scorched like mine."

Ellieslaw left the chapel with a gesture of mute despair.

"Follow him, Hubert Ratcliffe," said the Dwarf, "and inform him of his destiny. He will rejoice — for to breathe air, and to handle gold, is to him happiness."

"I understand nothing of all this," said Sir Frederick Langley; "but we are here a body of gentlemen in arms and authority for King James;



and whether you really, sir, be that Sir Edward Mauley, who has been so long supposed dead in confinement, or whether you be an impostor assuming his name and title, we will assume the freedom of detaining you till your appearance here, at this moment, is better accounted for; we will have no spies among us — Seize on him, my friends."

But the domestics shrunk back in doubt and alarm. Sir Frederick himself stepped forward towards the Recluse, as if to lay hands on his person, when his progress was suddenly stopped by the glittering point of a partizan, which the sturdy hand of Hobbie Elliot presented against his bosom.

"I'll gar day-light shine through ye, if ye offer to steer him. Naebody shall lay a finger on Elshie; he's a canny neighbourly man, aye ready to make a friend help; and, though ye may think him a lamiter, yet, grippie for grippie, friend, I'll wad a wether he'll make the blude spin frae under your nails. He's a teugh carle, Elshie! he grips like a smith's vice."

"What has brought you here, Elliot?" said Mareschal; "who called on you for interference?"



“Troth, Mareschal - Wells,” answered Hobbie, “I am just come here, wi’ twenty or thretty mair o’ us, in my ain name and the King’s — or Queen’s, ca’ they her? and canny Elshie’s into the bargain, to keep the peace, and pay back some ill usage Ellieslaw has gi’en me. A bonnie breakfast the loons gae me the ither morning, and him at the bottom o’t; and trow ye I wasna ready to supper him up? — Ye needna lay your hands on your swords, gentlemen, the house is our’s wi’ little din; for the doors were open, and there had been ower muckle punch amang your folk; we took their swords and pistols as easily as ye wad shiel pea - cods.”

Mareschal rushed out, and immediately re-entered the chapel.

“By Heaven! it is true, Sir Frederick; the house is filled with armed men, and our drunken beasts are all disarmed. Draw, and let us fight our way.”

“Binna rash — binna rash,” exclaimed Hobbie; „hear me a bit, hear me a bit. We mean ye nae harm; but, as ye are in arms for King James, as ye ca’ him, and the prelates, we thought it right to keep up the auld neighbour



war, and stand up for the t'other ane and the Kirk; but we'll no hurt a hair o' your heads, if ye like to gang hame quietly. And it will be your best way, for there's sure news come frae Loudoun, that him they ca' Bang, or Byng, or what is't, has bang'd the French ships and the new king aff the coast however; sae, ye had best bide content wi' auld Nanse for want of a better Queen."

Ratcliffe, who at this moment entered, confirmed these accounts, so unfavourable to the Jacobite interest. Sir Frederick almost instantly, and without taking leave of any one, left the castle, with such of his attendants as were able to follow him.

"And what will you do, Mr Mareschal?" said Ratcliffe.

"Why, faith," answered he, smiling, "I hardly know; my spirit is too great, and my fortune too small, for me to follow the example of the doughty bridegroom. It is not in my nature, and it is hardly worth my while."

"Well, then, disperse your men, and remain quiet; and this will be overlooked, as there has been no overt act."



„Hout, ay,” said Elliot, „just let byganes be byganes, and a’ friends again; de’il ane I bear malice at but Westburnflat, and I hae gi’en him baith a het skin and a cauld ane. I hadna changed three blows of the broadsword wi’ him before he lap the window into the castle-moat, and swattered through it like a wild-duck. He’s a clever fallow, indeed! maun kilt awa wi’ ae bonny lass in the morning, and another at night, less wadna serve him! but if he doesna kilt himsel out o’ the country, I’s e kilt him wi’ a tow, for the Castleton meeting’s clean blawn ower; his friends will no countenance him.”

During the general confusion, Isabella had thrown herself at the feet of her kinsman, Sir Edward Mauley, for so we must now call the Solitary, to express at once her gratitude, and to beseech forgiveness for her father. The eyes of all began to be fixed on them, as soon as their own agitation and the bustle of the attendants had somewhat abated. Miss Vere kneeled beside the tomb of her mother, to whose statue her features exhibited a marked resemblance. She held the hand of the Dwarf, which she kissed repeatedly and bathed with tears. He stood fixed and motionless, excepting that his eyes glanced alternately on the



marble figure, and the living suppliant. At length, the large drops which gathered on his eye-lashes compelled him to draw his hand across them.

„I thought,” he said, „that tears and I had done; but we shed them at our birth, and their spring dries not until we are in our graves. But no melting of the heart shall dissolve my resolution. I part here, at once, and for ever, with all of which the memory,” (looking to the tomb,) „or the presence,” (he pressed Isabella’s hand,) „is dear to me. — Speak not to me! attempt not to thwart my determination! it will avail nothing; you will hear of and see this lump of deformity no more. To you I shall be dead ere I am actually in my grave, and you will think of me as of a friend disencumbered from the toils and crimes of existence.”

He kissed Isabella on the forehead, impressed another kiss on the brow of the statue by which she knelt, and left the chapel followed by Ratcliffe. Isabella, almost exhausted with the emotions of the day, was carried to her apartment by her women. Most of the other guests dispersed, after having separately endeavoured to impress on all who would listen to them their



disapprobation of the plots formed against the government, or their regret for having engaged in them. Hobbie Elliot assumed the command of the castle for the night, and mounted a regular guard. He boasted not a little of the alacrity with which his friends and he had obeyed a hasty summons received from Elshie through the faithful Ratcliffe. And it was a lucky chance, he said, that on that very day they had got notice that Westburnflat did not intend to keep his tryste at Castleton, but to hold them at defiance; so that a considerable party had assembled at the Heugh-foot with the intention of paying a visit to the robbers' tower on the ensuing morning, and their course was easily directed to Ellieslaw Castle.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

— *Last scene of all,  
To close this strange eventful history.*

*As you like it.*

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ON the next morning, Mr Ratcliffe presented Miss Vere with a letter from her father, of which the following is the tenor: —

“MY DEAREST CHILD,

“The malice of a persecuting government will compel me, for my own safety, to retreat abroad, and to remain for some time in foreign parts. I do not ask you to accompany, or follow me; you will attend to my interest and your own more effectually by remaining where you are. It is unnecessary to enter into a minute detail concerning the causes of the strange events which yesterday took place. I think I have reason to complain of the usage



I have received from Sir Edward Mauley, who is your nearest kinsman by the mother's side; but, as he has declared you his heir, and is to put you in immediate possession of a large part of his fortune, I account it a full atonement. I am aware he has never forgiven the preference which your mother gave to my addresses, instead of complying with the terms of a sort of family compact which absurdly and tyrannically destined her to wed her deformed relative. The shock was even sufficient to unsettle his wits, (which; indeed, were never over-well arranged;) and I had, as the husband of his nearest kinswoman and heir, the delicate task of taking care of his person and property, until he was reinstated in the management of the latter by those who, no doubt, thought they were doing him justice; although, if some parts of his subsequent conduct be examined, it will appear that he ought, for his own sake, to have been left under the influence of a mild and salutary restraint.

«In one particular, however, he shewed a sense of the ties of blood, as well as of his own frailty; for while he sequestered himself closely from the world, under various names and disguises, and insisted on spreading a re-



port of his own death, (in which to gratify him I willingly acquiesced,) he left to my disposal the rents of a great proportion of his estates, and especially all those, which, having belonged to your mother, reverted to him as a male fief. In this he may have thought that he was acting with extreme generosity, while, in the opinion of all impartial men, he will only be considered as having fulfilled a natural obligation, seeing that, in justice, if not in strict law, you must be considered as the heir of your mother, and I as your legal administrator. Instead, therefore, of considering myself as loaded with obligations to Sir Edward on this account, I think I had reason to complain that these remittances were only doled out to me at the pleasure of Mr Ratcliffe, who, moreover, exacted from me mortgages over my paternal estate of Ellieslaw for any sums which I required as an extra advance; and thus may be said to have insinuated himself into the absolute management and controul of my property. Or, if all this seeming friendship was employed by Sir Edward for the purpose of obtaining a complete command of my affairs, and acquiring the power of ruining me at his pleasure, I feel myself, I must repeat, still less bound by the alleged obligation.



„About the autumn of last year, as I understand, either his own crazed imagination, or the accomplishment of some such scheme as I have hinted, brought him down to this country. His alleged motive, it seems, was a desire of seeing a monument which he had directed to be raised in the chapel over the tomb of your mother. Mr Ratcliffe, who at this time had done me the honour to make my house his own, had the complaisance to introduce him secretly into the chapel. The consequence, as he informs me, was a frenzy of several hours, during which he fled into the neighbouring moors, in one of the wildest spots of which he chose, when he was somewhat recovered, to fix his mansion, and set up for a sort of country empiric, a character, which, even in his best days, he was fond of assuming. It is remarkable, that, instead of informing me of these circumstances, that I might have had the relative of my late wife taken such care of as his calamitous condition required, Mr Ratcliffe seems to have had such culpable indulgence for his irregular plans as to promise and even swear secrecy concerning them. He visited Sir Edward often, and assisted in the fantastic task he had taken upon him of constructing a hermitage. Nothing they ap-

XLVII.

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pear to have dreaded more than a discovery of their intercourse.

„The ground was open in every direction around, and a small soutterain, probably sepulchral, which their researches had detected near the great granite pillar, served to conceal Ratcliffe when any one approached his master. I think you will be of opinion, my love, that this secrecy must have had some strong motive. It is also remarkable, that while I thought my unhappy friend was residing among the monks at La Trappe, he should have been actually living, for many months, in this bizarre disguise, within five miles of my house, and obtaining regular information of my most private movements, either by Ratcliffe, or through Westburnflat and others, whom he had the means to bribe to any extent. He makes it a crime against me, that I endeavoured to establish your marriage with Sir Frederick. I acted for the best; but if he thought otherwise, why did he not step manfully forward, express his own purpose of becoming a party to the settlements, and take that interest which he is entitled to claim in you as heir to his great property?

„Even now, though he is somewhat tardy in



announcing his purpose, I am far from opposing my authority against his wishes, although the person he desires you to regard as your future husband be young Earnscliff, the very last whom I should have thought likely to be acceptable to him. But I give my free and hearty consent, providing the settlements are drawn in such an irrevocable form as may secure my child from suffering by that state of dependence, and that sudden and causeless revocation of allowances, of which I have so much reason to complain. Of Sir Frederick Langley, I augur, you will hear no more. He is not likely to claim the hand of a dowerless maiden. I therefore commit you, my dear Isabella, to the wisdom of Providence and to your own prudence, begging you to lose no time in securing those advantages, which the fickleness of your kinsman has withdrawn from me to shower upon you.

«Mr Ratcliffe mentioned Sir Edward's intention to settle a considerable sum upon me yearly, for my maintenance in foreign parts; but this my heart is too proud to accept from him. I told him I had a dear child, who, while in affluence herself, would never suffer me to be in poverty. I thought it right to in-



timate this to him pretty roundly, that whatever increase be settle upon you, it may be calculated so as to cover this necessary and natural encumbrance. I will willingly settle upon you the castle and manor of Ellieslaw, to shew my parental affection and disinterested zeal for promoting your settlement in life. The annual interest of debts charged on the estate somewhat exceeds the income, even after a reasonable rent has been put upon the mansion and mains. But as all the debts are in the person of Mr Ratcliffe, as your kinsman's trustee, he will not be a troublesome creditor. And here I must make you aware, that though I have to complain of Mr Ratcliffe's conduct to me personally, I, nevertheless, believe him a just and upright man, with whom you may safely consult on your affairs, not to mention that to cherish his good opinion will be the best way to retain that of your kinsman. Remember me to Marchie — I hope he will not be troubled on account of late matters. I will write more fully from the Continent. Meanwhile, I rest your loving father.

RICHARD VERE."

The above letter throws the only additional light which we have been able to procure upon



the earlier part of our story. It was Hobbie's opinion, and may be that of most of our readers, that the Recluse of Mucklestane-Moor had but a kind of a gloaming, or twilight understanding; and that he had neither very clear views as to what he himself wanted, nor was apt to pursue his ends by the clearest and most direct means: so that to seek the clew of his conduct, was likened, by Hobbie, to looking for a straight path through a common, in which are a hundred devious tracks, but not one distinct line of road.

When Isabella had perused the letter, her first enquiry was after her father. He had left the castle early in the morning, after a long interview with Mr Ratcliffe, and was already far on his way to the next port, where he might expect to find shipping for the Continent.

“Where was Sir Edward Mauley?”

No one had seen the Dwarf since the eventful scene of the preceding evening.

“Odd, if ony thing has befa'en puir Elshie,” said Hobbie Elliot, “I wad rather I were harried ower again.”

He immediately rode to his dwelling, and



the remaining she-goat came bleating to meet him, for her milking time was long past. The Solitary was no where to be seen; his door, contrary to wont, was open, his fire extinguished, and the whole hut was left in the state which it exhibited on Isabella's visit to him. It was pretty clear that the means of conveyance which had brought the Dwarf to Ellieslaw on the preceding evening, had removed him from it to some other place of abode. Hobbie returned disconsolate to the castle.

"I am doubting we ha'e lost Canny Elshie for gude an' a'."

"You have indeed," said Ratcliffe, producing a paper, which he put into Hobbie's hands; "but read that, and you will perceive you have been no loser by having known him."

It was a short deed of gift, by which "Sir Edward Mauley, otherwise called Elshender the Recluse, endowed Halbert, or Hobbie Elliot, and Grace Armstrong, in full property, with a considerable sum borrowed by Elliot from him."

Hobbie's joy was mingled with feelings which brought tears down his rough cheeks.



“It’s a queer thing,” he said; “but I canna joy in the gear unless I kenn’d the puir body was happy that gave it me.”

“Next to enjoying happiness ourselves,” said Ratcliffe, “is the consciousness of having bestowed it on others. Had all my master’s benefits been conferred like the present, what a different return would they have produced! But the indiscriminate profusion that would glut avarice, or supply prodigality, neither does good, nor is rewarded by gratitude. It is sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind.”

“And that wad be a light har’st,” said Hobbie; “but, wi’ my young leddy’s leave, I wad fain take down Elshie’s skeps o’ bees, and set them in Grace’s bit floweryard at the Heugh-foot — they shall ne’er be smeekit by ony o’ huz. And the puir goat, she would be neglectit about a great town like this; and she could feed bonnily on our lily lea by the burnside, and the hounds wad ken her in a day’s time, and never fash her, and Grace wad milk her ilka morning wi’ her ain hand, for Elshie’s sake; for though he was thrawn and cankered in his converse, he liket dumb creatures weel.”

Hobbie’s requests were readily granted, not



without some wonder at the natural delicacy of feeling which pointed out to him this mode of displaying his gratitude. He was delighted when Ratcliffe informed him that his benefactor should not remain ignorant of the care which he took of his favourite.

“And mind be sure and tell him that gran-nie and the titties, and, abune a’, Grace and mysel, are weel and thriving, and that it’s a’ his doing — that canna but please him, ane wad think.”

And Elliot and the family at Heugh-foot were, and continued to be, as fortunate and happy as his undaunted honesty, tenderness, and gallantry, so well merited.

All bar between the marriage of Earnscliff and Isabella was now removed, and the settlements which Ratcliffe produced, on the part of Sir Edward Mauley, might have satisfied the cupidity of Ellieslaw himself. But Miss Vere and Ratcliffe thought it unnecessary to mention to Earnscliff that one great motive of Sir Edward in thus loading the young pair with benefits, was to expiate his having, many years before, shed the blood of his father in a hasty brawl. If it be true, as Ratcliffe asserted, that



the Dwarf's extreme misanthropy seemed to relax somewhat, under the consciousness of having diffused happiness among so many, the recollection of this circumstance might probably be one of his chief motives for refusing obstinately ever to witness their state of contentment.

Mareschal hunted, shot, and drank claret — tired of the country, went abroad, served three campaigns, came home, and married Lucy Ilderton.

Years fled over the heads of Earnscliff and his wife, and found and left them contented and happy. The scheming ambition of Sir Frederick Langley engaged him in the unfortunate insurrection of 1715. He was made prisoner at Preston, in Lancashire, with the Earl of Derwentwater and others. His defence, and the dying speech which he made on the occasion, may be found in the State Trials. Mr Vere, supplied by his daughter with an ample income, continued to reside abroad, engaged deeply in the affair of Law's bank during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, and was at one time supposed to be immensely rich. But, on the bursting of that famous bubble, he was so much chagrined at being again reduced to a moderate annuity, (although he saw thou-



sands of his companions in misfortune absolutely starving,) that vexation of mind brought on a paralytic stroke, of which he died after lingering under its effects a few weeks.

Willie of Westburnflat fled from the wrath of Hobbie Elliot, as his betters did from the pursuit of the law. His patriotism urged him to serve his country abroad, while his reluctance to leave his native soil pressed him rather to remain in the beloved island, and collect purses, watches, and rings on the high-roads at home. Fortunately for him, the first impulse prevailed, and he joined the army under Marlborough; obtained a commission, to which he was recommended by his services in collecting cattle for the commissariat; returned home after many years, with some money, (how come by heaven only knows) — demolished the peel-house at Westburnflat, and built, in its stead, a high narrow *onstead*, of three stories, with a chimney at each end — drank brandy with the neighbours, whom, in his younger days, he had plundered — died in his bed, and is recorded upon his tombstone at Kirkwhistle, (still extant) as having played all the parts of a brave soldier, a discreet neighbour, and a sincere Christian.



Mr Ratcliffe resided usually with the family at Ellieslaw; but regularly every spring and autumn he absented himself for about a month. On the direction and purpose of his periodical journey he remained steadily silent; but it was well understood that he was then in attendance on his unfortunate patron. At length, on his return from one of these visits, his grave countenance, and deep mourning dress, announced to the Ellieslaw family that their benefactor was no more. Sir Edward's death made no addition to their fortune, for he had divested himself of his property during his lifetime, and chiefly in their favour. Ratcliffe, his sole confidant, died at a good old age, but without ever naming the place to which his master had finally retired, or the manner of his death, or the place of his burial. It was supposed that on all these particulars his patron had enjoined him strict secrecy.

The sudden disappearance of Elshie from his extraordinary hermitage corroborated the reports which the common people had spread concerning him. Many believed that, having ventured to enter a consecrated building, contrary to his paction with the Evil One, he had been bodily carried off while on his return to



his cottage; but most are of opinion that he only disappeared for a season, and continues to be seen from time to time among the hills. And retaining, according to custom, a more vivid recollection of his wild and desperate language, than of the benevolent tendency of most of his actions, he is usually indented with the malignant dæmon called the Man of the Moors, whose feats were quoted by Mrs Elliot to her grandsons; and, accordingly, is generally represented as bewitching the sheep, causing the ewes to *keb*, that is, to cast their lambs, or seen loosening the impending wreath of snow to precipitate its weight on such as take shelter, during the storm, beneath the bank of a torrent, or under the shelter of a steep glen. In short, the evils most dreaded and deprecated by the inhabitants of that pastoral country, are ascribed to the agency of the Black Dwarf.

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# *Corrections to the Works of Walter Scott. Vol. 26.*

| Page | 13, | Line 19, | instead of | he       | read | be       |
|------|-----|----------|------------|----------|------|----------|
| 32   |     | 8        | —          | he       | —    | be       |
| 46   |     | 4        | —          | fragment | —    | fragment |
| 50   |     | 22       | —          | laboured | —    | laboured |
| 52   |     | 20       | —          | fetching | —    | fetching |
| 61   |     | 25       | —          | bad      | —    | had      |
| 82   |     | 3        | —          | no       | —    | not      |

## *Vol. 27.*

|     |    |   |           |   |           |
|-----|----|---|-----------|---|-----------|
| 32  | 8  | — | heen      | — | been      |
| 51  | 20 | — | hrawls    | — | brawls    |
| 85  | 13 | — | deceitful | — | deceitful |
| 105 | 23 | — | puspose   | — | purpose   |
| 107 | 1  | — | look      | — | book      |



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